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MENU

JOURNAL OF FOOD & HOSPITALITY RESEARCH

FOOD:

Between Fear(s) and Pleasure(s)

#1

MENU: JOURNAL OF FOOD & HOSPITALITY RESEARCH

Aims and Scope

Menu: Journal of Food and Hospitality Research aims to publishes articles on food behaviors, in link with culinary arts, foodservice and hospitality. Its scientific ambition is both thematic and methodological. Firstly, it proposes to publish the work of researchers interested in food, culinary arts and gastronomy, and who place people – as cooks or as consumers - at the center of their works. Secondly, from a methodological standpoint, the journal gives priority to ecological studies of these activities, promoting the development of *in situ* and *in vivo* approaches. While social sciences, behavioral sciences and humanities are at the heart of publications, the journal aims to maintain an interdisciplinary dialogue, especially with food engineering. As a scientific journal, it also aims to bring together the academic, public and private sectors, through the diffusion of applied research.
Menu publishes articles on the basis of calls for papers (for thematic papers) or voluntary submissions. Articles are subject to a double-blind review process involving internationally recognized, experienced researchers from the relevant scientific fields.
The journal contains four types of publications:

- **Research articles** present accomplished research works.
- **Varia** are research articles addressing a topic different from the theme of the issue.
- **Book reviews** are short articles presenting a critical view on recently published books.
- **Fieldnotes** are short research reports on exploratory studies or on the preliminary results of ongoing research works.

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CONTENTS

Editorial 4
L. Saulais, O. Wathelet

Research Articles

Variables Affecting Children's Experience of Eating at School 7
B. Atie Guidalli

Defining pleasure toward individual familiarity level: The case of gourmet meal 18
P. Bayet-Robert

Theoretical Models of Good Hygiene Practices Training: current approaches and perspectives 27
S. Desaulty

From the table to the bed: controlling female sexuality through food in French Renaissance literature 37
A. Gilles-Chikhaoui

Is hippophagy a taboo in constant evolution? 47
S. Leteux

Differences between Patients and Staff's Perception of Food Provision in Malaysian Public Hospitals 55
R. Vijayakumaran

Eating with the fear of weight gain: The relationship with food for overweight women in France 67
S.Carof

Pleasures and stress of eating alone and eating together among French and German young adults 77
G. Danesi

Field Notes

Control of eating behaviour and eating pleasure among French female college students 92
MC de Moraes Prata Gaspar

Book Reviews

Book Review : Sociologie d'une crise alimentaire. Les consommateurs à l'épreuve de la maladie de la vache folle 97
M. Fontas

Book Review : Nourrir de Plaisir: Régression, transgression, transmission, régulation? 101
C. Yount-André

Editorial

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Menu: Journal of Food and Hospitality Research is a new journal dedicated to food-related practices, usages, behaviors, decisions and perceptions, with a special focus on culinary arts, foodservice and gastronomy. Food is at the same time a product with sensory properties, a marketable good, a means to meet physiological needs and a symbolic stand. As such, its study calls for a diversity of approaches. Among the range of approaches available, the scope of *Menu* is to focus on human beings and on the relationships between food and people, rather than, for instance, food engineering, ingredients chemistry or culinary processes. Among the many journals which address the topic of food behaviors, *Menu* aims to create a dialogue between foodservice, culinary arts and political, economic, social and human sciences. Technology is seen through the lenses of users: food properties, sensory qualities and culinary techniques are described as the results of perceptions, behaviors, practices and complexes process of decision making. Restaurants, kitchens and any places where people eat and cook are social arenas where people live. This is what we would like to capture through a scientific glimpse.

As an opening volume of this publication, we wanted to highlight the richness and complexities of food behaviors by focusing on the articulations between the fears and pleasures associated to food. This first issue of Menu reflects the outcome of a two-day workshop on this topic, which was organized in July 2010 in the Institut Paul Bocuse Research Center with the intent to create a unique opportunity of multidisciplinary scientific exchanges for junior researchers. The issue gathers Research Articles, Field Notes and Book Reviews from the workshop participants as well as external contributions, all aiming to investigate this topic from a variety of disciplinary and methodological perspectives.

From food neophobia to sanitary crises, or sensory hedonism, the notions of fear and of pleasure are omnipresent in food-related topics. Yet, they are rarely investigated jointly in food research. However, food choice and experience rely on meanings, ethics and cultural constraints that models forms of "pleasure and anxiety of eating" (Coveney 2000). Nutritional discourses, whether they originate from public health policies, health professionals, the media, or the food industry, shape the definition of what can be considered as "good" or "bad", healthy or unhealthy, pleasant or unpleasant (Reinarman 2007). How much credence do people give to these discourses and recommendations, and how do they deal with potential conflicts of these norms with their physical needs and wants? Behind the notion of fear is the idea of a certain loss of trust. As a source of nutrients, food is a prerequisite for life, a fuel for the body. Yet, a certain level of confidence in the benefit of food incorporation is a condition to eating pleasure. As a sensory stimulant, food may be associated with a large range of feelings, which may be either positive or negative, from the awaited nostalgic reassurance to the surprise of aromatic association never encountered before or even the addictive attraction to specific ingredients. Lastly, food is a social medium, which brings people together and connects them, but may also be a source of misunderstanding when different food cultures and models collide. As such, it has been hypothesized that each culture develops a "flavor principle" allowing people to cope with the anxiety of novelty, moral value and physiological reaction (Beardsworth & Keil 1997). Not only does this hypothesis still need to be discussed through the lens of fresh scientific data, but it also needs to be confronted to the fact that large range of daily encounters between people leads to complex situations when cultural models collide and are negotiated. Beyond the realm of macro-cultural transformation, how do people enact pleasure and fear in the context of eating and cooking?

The authors who contributed to this opening volume share a similar interest for gastronomy, namely the art and knowledge involved in preparing and eating good food. Their approaches of this "fear and pleasure" duo appeal to a variety of scientific fields and are based on multiple methodologies.

Stéphane Desaulty addresses good hygiene practices training in the catering industry. Based on preliminary observations and a literature review, he proposes new theoretical approaches to take psychological aspects of decision making into account. In his article, the application of good hygiene practices is viewed as a decision about sanitary risk, putting emphasis on the representation and risk perception which are important features to be further studied. His research demonstrates how psychological models contribute to an innovative training approach, considering both reasoning and intuition as part of decision making processes.

If risk perception may be a matter of skill, pleasure and expertise are also associated in the context of a customer experience at the restaurant. The article of Philomène Bayet-Robert underlines how the pleasure experienced in the context of gourmet meal is modulated and described in a different way by customers according to their level of familiarity to food and gastronomy. Novice customers tend to describe pleasure as a global and physical feeling, as opposed to experts, for whom pleasure is the main factor for the constitution of experience. Both Desaulty and Bayet-Robert's articles make it possible to think about the process of learning (whether it is learning how to be pleased or how to judge risk), not solely in the sense of being able to perceive food in a right way, but also of becoming an expert in perceiving food in a specific ways and in specific contexts.

Another central dimension of the fear/pleasure debate is how social norms and cultural values are dealt with in daily life. This implies a complex dialogue between values as they are understood and the image of the self, notably of the body. As an illustration, Solenn Carof discusses whether the 'overweight' category could help to understand people's relationship with food, and to identify differences in representations and behaviours between obese and overweight women. The author points out the existence of a binary conception of 'good' and 'bad' food, and the notion of 'control' used by people trying to lose weight and fearing to gain it. She identifies five main profiles of eaters, according to their relationship with food. In a similar vein, Maria Clara de Moraes Prata Gaspar investigates to what extent the medicalization of food and the seeking of weight loss can affect the relationship that French female college students have between their control of eating behaviours and their eating pleasure. The author presents her fieldwork among twenty French college students, which reveals contradictory discourses about food, pleasure and beauty related to the weight of contradictory aesthetic, medical and cultural norms among these women. Much like in the case of the works of Solenn Carof, the notions of control and self-achievement appear to be predominant in the relationship with food. Both articles address the issue of mastering the self and dealing with multidimensional representations of norms and values. They remind the readers of the notion that cultural norms vary in the way they are embodied, but also depend on the behaviors of actors.

This variety of norms should be confronted with the variety of eating situations. Too often, cultural values tend to hide the diversity of emotions expressed. In particular, by putting an emphasis on the positive value of eating together, works in social sciences sometimes tend to neglects critical aspects of the relationship between making food, eating and various forms of emotions. By presenting her ethnographic fieldwork among young adults in France and Germany, Giada Danesi describes the variety of food-related emotions, when eating alone or when surrounded by friends. Between the stress of cooking for guests and the pleasure of being restful when eating alone, the practices of eaters are highly variable. Interestingly, the variation of attitudes towards food between French and German people seems to explain some of the elements of diversity identified. Besides, it appears that people learn to deal with their material and social condition to create adequate situations of enjoyable eating moments.

Historical transformation is another aspect of the ways fear and pleasure have been connected to food consumption. In his case study, Sylvain Leteux addresses the topic of hippophagy from a historical perspective. The author presents the consumption of horse meat around the world and its historical evolution. Then, he makes a focus on the case of 19th-century France in order to study the evolution of horse meat acceptance, showing how political interests may impact the curve of consumption. The perimeter of what is deemed 'good to eat' is far from being fixed, as is the definition of pleasure, which shows strong variation in time.

The body in general, and sexuality in particular, are also often connected to food in popular and scholarly representations, showing variation in the way pleasure and fear are connected. Sexuality among other things, stresses complex tensions between pleasure and a sense of guilty. In order to investigate the control of female sexuality through food during the Renaissance, Audrey Gilles Chikahoui makes an analysis of two texts from the French Literature, Liébault's "Thresor des remedes secrets du mal des femmes" and Brantôme's "Des dames

qui font l'amour et leurs maris cocus". These two texts deal with food, female sexuality and desire, and underline the perplexity and anxiety caused by woman's pleasure.

Finally, the pleasure and fear duo is also structured around the institutional organization of eating. A specifity of the foodservice industry, at the core of *Menu*, is that it put emphasis on the relationship between cooks and eaters, waiters and customers, and a large range of catering contexts. In their paper, Reena Vijayakumaran et al. studied the perception of food by both patients and staff in Malaysian Hospitals. Their work reveals a discrepancy between the perceptions of partients and staff in the way food at the hospital is perceived. While patients were more focused on cultural and social aspects of consumption, the staff was more concerned about the convenience about the food provision.

The context of collective catering emphasizes the role of social interaction between peers in the process of evaluating and experiencing meals. Barbara Atie Guidalli et al. provide an interesting insight into the diversity of factors affecting children's food behavior at school, a context in which food pleasure and fears are particularly at stake. They successively talk about the distance between the codes of conduct and actual eating practices, and about the impact of environmental stimuli of the cafeteria. They also evoke the differences in food preferences according to gender and age, and discuss the frequent comparison of school food with home food. Finally, they describe the relationship between students and lunch room monitors. All those criteria allow the reader to gain a deep understanding of the variety of factors contributing to food preferences.

Closing the volume, two book reviews further extend the debate about fear and pleasure in food practices.

Chelsie Yount-André made a detailed presentation of Nourrir de Plaisir, a compilation by Corbeau (2008) of twenty-five essays first presented at a colloquium. Authors study the role of pleasure in eating, focusing on issues concerning the politics of food education, health, and the social construction of the self. Their common goal is to demonstrate how enjoyment derived from food and eating is understood and structured in culturally specific ways.

Finally, Marine Fontas presents a review of Jocelyn Raude's "Sociologie d'une crise alimentaire. Les consommateurs à l'épreuve de la maladie de la vache folle." This book addresses the topic of the so-called « mad-cow crisis », which has been a noticeable event in recent years, strongly influencing the way consumers deal with sanitary risks. Reviewing Jocelyn Raude's book, Marine Fontas highlights the multiple rationalities at task when people dealt with such a complex situation. The systemic analysis developed by the French sociologist allows the reader to understand the weight of social and environmental factors on decision making. Between conservatism and resilience, a crisis also appears to be a critical event to understand how consumptions patterns evolve.

In a journal originating from a Culinary Arts, Hospitality and Foodservice School, it may have been tempting to focus on the technical and technological respects of cooking skills, analyzing fear and pleasure through the lenses of the sole chef-customer relation. But just like "good food" cannot be objectively defined; the very act of preparing and eating food, of appreciating it or not, is only appropriately understood through a circumstanced description of the actual settings, of the context of performance and of real-life situation. This claim has set up the foundation of the Research Center of the Institut Paul Bocuse, and is thus at task in the editorial management of the journal. Understanding food practices implies paying attention to the density of the human-food relations. We built this first volume as a foundation for this ambitious project.

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Variables Affecting Children's Experience of Eating at School

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Abstract

Over the past decades in Spain, eating in school cafeterias has become increasingly more common among school children. Some studies attest that the meals served in school cafeterias are very often nutritionally unbalanced. However, according to our hypothesis, this diagnosis seems inadequate. Even if the planned school meals are nutritionally balanced, the food actually eaten by a student may not be. This paper argues that the real consumption of food is a result of many factors and circumstances that influence the experience of eating lunch at school and, particularly, the experience of the hedonic pleasure of eating. These factors include, among others, the normative, organizational and dynamic context of the cafeteria; the effect of environmental characteristics on food intake; the relationship between students and the foodservice staff, and their role in reducing the fear of unfamiliar food and encouraging its consumption; students' perceptions and attitudes toward health, body and ultimately their way of thinking and rationalizing food. A more precise evaluation of the actual practices of food consumption in schools and their reasons can eventually lead to the improvement of food services offered in school cafeterias.

Keywords: school cafeteria, school meal, actual intake, food acceptance, food rejection.

1. Introduction

The rise of obesity and other eating disorders among children and adolescents in Spain has brought increasing concern and attention to the subject. This concern has spurred a proliferation of studies to better understand the eating habits of this segment of the Spanish population. As an increasing number of students regularly eat in school cafeterias, a number of studies have been dedicated to the analysis of the nutritional quality of food served in schools. According to the Ministry of Education of the Government of Spain, 14, 364 educational centers offered school lunches to 1, 844, 270 diners during the 2008-2009 academic school year. It is estimated that 20% of students have their main meal in their academic institution, 5 days a week. This percentage increases to 32% for students between the ages of 2 and 5 years old. Spanish children eat in school an average of 165 days a year and this food should provide between 30% and 35% of their daily energy needs.

However, according to our hypothesis, previous studies conducted in Spain on the quality of school meals[I] have been limited in their approach and methodology. They are based on information from the planned menus, not on the *actual* consumption of food. We can confirm (Observatorio de la Alimentación, 2004) that an important divergence exists between the planned menus in schools and the food actually eaten by students. This shows that even if lunch menus are planned in accordance with nutritionally balanced standards, the meal actually eaten by a student is not necessarily balanced.

Therefore, actual food intake is not the result of planned and served menus but a number of factors and circumstances that can influence the attitudes and decisions of students towards food: psycho-physiological factors (organoleptic characteristics foods that are manifested at the individual level), socio-cultural factors (social meanings of food and meals; perceptions and attitudes regarding body and gender differences, among others) and organizational- pedagogical factors related to the school cafeteria (the combination of rules and specific practices of the cafeteria space, time devoted to eating, the people involved – students, lunch room monitors, cooks, teachers, parents – and the level of interaction among them). It is necessary to take all these factors into consideration in order to understand the complexity of "eating in school."

With this article, we hope to address the factors that create to greater or lesser extent, the experience of children eating in school cafeterias. The empirical data presented in this article come from the larger project *Eating in school and its circumstances: learning, culture, and health*[II]: its main purpose is to learn, characterize, analyze, understand, and explain the attitudes and actual eating habits of children and adolescents in school, and the reasons for them[III].

2. Methodology

Nineteen schools have been evaluated up to this project (fourteen in the province of Barcelona and one each from the provinces of Girona, Zaragoza, Valencia, Oviedo and Murcia). Data has been collected from these schools to form an accurate characterization relative to the organization and regulatory context of the cafeteria such as: schedules, shifts, distribution and coordination of the tables; established guidelines of behavior, guidelines for supervision and for the supervisors; type of cafeteria service used at the school (own kitchen, catering or a combination of the two), cumulative record of menus served (to compare with the actual food served), the nutritional value of the meals, the organoleptic characteristics of the dishes, preparation methods, frequency of dishes throughout a single month, etc.

The informal method of "direct observation floating" was used to record the food practices of

[I] The evaluation of more than 200 menus by the magazine *Consumer Eroski* (1998, 2004, and 2008); the study "*The Consumption of Fish in school cafeterias,"* by FROM (2006); the study *"Tell me how you eat"* (2004); the analysis of 934 menus by the magazine OCU (2006); the free review of school menus by the Department of Health and Department of Education of Cataluña for the academic years 2006-2008; among others.

[II] The project *Eating at school and its circumstances: learning, culture and health* is organized as part of the *Programa de la Subdirección General de Proyectos de Investigación del Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación del Gobierno de España* [Referencia: CSO2009-08741 (subprograma SOCI)]

[III] To a large extent, with this project we have clarified the working hypotheses developed in the first investigation our group completed on the subject of school cafeterias (Observatorio de la Alimentación, 2004), where we described and analyzed the actual consumption of the menus of six Spanish schools (pre-school, elementary and high school) and conducted interviews with students to understand their practices and perceptions about the food served in their schools.

students during recess on the playground and the times of arriving and leaving school. Fundamentally, observation has been concentrated on what is eaten for breakfast, what is thrown into the trash and any exchanges of food or drink that take place between students. Direct observation of the school cafeteria space also paid specific attention to the following elements: a) the attitudes and gestures of the students in response to the dishes served; b) the relationship between the lunchroom monitors and the students; c) the physical space of the cafeteria: decoration, light, cleanliness, layout of the tables; and d) the type of service relative to the utensils and cups used, trays and/or plates, form of service at the table, etc.

Throughout the observations, the project also tried to record students' opinions by encouraging commentaries. Students were asked about the quality of the cafeteria food in general and specifically for that day. Whether it was "good"/"bad;" too cold or too hot; its appearance, texture, color; what ingredients they would substitute, eliminate, or add. Additionally, the "real consumption" of food in the cafeterias, throughout the period of week (Monday to Friday), was recorded across different weeks and schools. This record consists of the quantification of uneaten food left on the plates, noting what food students hide and what they exchange amongst themselves.

In addition, fifteen discussion groups have been carried out with children and adolescents between the ages of 6 and 16 years old. Through these discussion groups we have accumulated students' opinions and perceptions of their school's cafeteria concerning its environment, rule system, and the daily menus offered. The students also discussed their own behavior and attitudes towards food in general and towards certain ingredients, specific foods, dishes and preparations.

3. The circumstances affecting food intake and eating behavior of students in the cafeteria

Before looking at these different circumstances and *influential* factors, we would first like to clarify some general aspects of how Spanish school cafeterias function:

Usually, the lunch service offered by a school may be operated by a *catering* company (which provides ready-made food daily) or from the kitchen of the school, if they have the facilities and necessary equipment. There is also another option, combining the previous two, in which a catering company provides the cooks working in the kitchen as well as the ingredients and products needed for the daily preparation of the lunch menus. These three types of cafeteria service are the most commonly offered in Spanish schools. However, there are schools that choose other modes of service. For example, students bring their own lunch from home, or, they can combine their food from home with the first or second course served in the cafeteria.

The lunch time monitors can be contracted from an outside company (catering or otherwise) or they can be employed by the school. The type of food service also depends on each cafeteria. The menu can be served to the students seated at their tables or buffet style, using a serving line system with plates or aluminum trays.

The Spanish *school lunch menu,* as we know it today, consists of a first course (a starter) usually consisting of rice, vegetables, soup, beans or pasta; a second course (main dish) normally beef, chicken, pork, fish or eggs – often accompanied by salad or garnish of vegetables – and a dessert, preferably fruit or yogurt. Bread and water are always offered. In the vast majority of schools, children have only one daily menu (although there are some high schools which offer more than one option, usually for the second course). The daily food options vary only for certain health problems (allergies, celiac disease, diabetes, etc.) or due to cultural variables (schoolchildren of Muslim origin are not offered pork). Each month, families receive the planned menus so they can follow what will be served to the students each day. Menus are organized by nutrition experts to assure they are nutritionally balanced. However, as we will see later in this paper, *to eat well* in school not only means meeting the recommendations for nutritional quality and food safety but to also follow rules for proper eating behavior.

▪ 3.1. Between codes of conduct and eating practices

It is commonly accepted that the school cafeteria plays an essential role in satisfying the daily nutritional needs of its users. It also holds an educational function, contributing to the development of healthy food habits, as well as establishing norms of socialization and coexistence (Aranceta *et al.*, 2008). These functions are reflected in the concept of the school cafeteria as a learning space but also a regulated space.

According to our observations in schools, the cafeteria holds certain rules for conduct and behavior, normally in the form of a specific list, the supervision of which falls to the lunch room monitors. However, from the outset, students perceive the cafeteria as a space more relaxed than the classroom. It is considered a place for leisure and recreation. Thus, to require a student to "*finish the whole plate*" seems to oppose the goal of promoting autonomy in children. To be independent does not simply mean to eat by oneself but to have the ability to know what you need and what you want. To limit a child's capacity to intervene in their own food consumption, through selection and establishment of portion size, promotes dissatisfaction and fosters the rejection of dishes and the appearance of uneaten food (Observatorio de la Alimentación, 2004).

In this sense, Lioré and Guétat (2009: 61), during fieldwork in school cafeterias in Marseille and Strasbourg, France, observed that from a single cafeteria a diversity of opinions can be heard. From their study, the comments of adolescent students varied by age. The youngest students, 11-12 years old, and the oldest students, 17-19 years old, expressed more positive views about the food served at their school. In the case of the 11-12 year olds, the researchers attributed this to a phase of discovery of junior high school (Collège in France). In their first year at a new school, students had a desire to integrate themselves and find their place within a group of older students. Thus, according to the authors, the younger students' enthusiasm for staying to eat lunch at school was not based on the quality of the food but the social aspect of sharing a meal with their friends. For them, lunch time was associated with sociability and more relaxed even "bad" table manners (play with the food, eat the courses out of order, etc.). For researcher Comoretto (2010), a dining "transgression" could be squeezing the fruit of the day to make juice or making torpedoes out of pieces of bread or other foods. These actions, observed during research in Parisian schools, are part of how students build their own identity and that of their group of friends. Although each school has rules and codes of conduct established for the cafeteria space, it is a more relaxed environment than the classroom.

These studies reveal a child's food sociability, where "to play," in a broader sense, has become part of the context of the midday meal at school. Yet, when we look at the reality of lunch rooms in Spain, that playful "liberty" is contrasted with the authoritative tone of unaltered rules which are part of the daily experience of Spanish students dining in cafeterias. "Don't play with your food; Sit properly; Don't talk with your mouth full; Use your utensils properly; Don't bother the person sitting next to you; etc" Rules such as these, according to Gracia and Comelles (2007: 78), correspond more to values from the middle of the last century and contrast with today's more relaxed and accommodating dining behavior observed in a familial environment.

According to the rules of conduct in the Spanish cafeteria, exchanging food is explicitly prohibited. From their experience at home, children have learned that to offer a portion of your own plate to another creates complicity among the diners and also is an expression of trust and affection. Within the environment of the cafeteria, students exchange food for different reasons (give someone what you do not like, to empty one's plate quickly, to obtain another food item). These exchanges of food are not permitted, yet the prohibition can stimulate even more the practice of interchanging food. Exchanging food is the most common way to get rid of unwanted dishes but there are many "techniques" utilized by students. Other practices we have observed include: hiding unwanted food in a napkin or even the pocket of a student, dropping food under the table, strategically placing it around the side of the plate, or spiting it into a corner of the cafeteria. Although these actions are difficult to measure in a quantitative manner, they certainly have a direct effect on the actual daily consumption of food.

Exchanges and other ways of "getting rid" of unwanted food are stimulated by the rule of "finishing one's plate." It has been observed that the pressure to finish all the food on one's plate can have negative effects on children's intake. According to a 2006 study, children actually consume significantly more food when they are not pressured to eat (Galloway, Fiorito, Francis & Birch, 2006). The level of "pressure," or use of this rule, evidently varies depending on the school. During observations conducted for this project, we visited cafeterias where it was not permitted to leave even a chickpea on one's plate – literally a chickpea – while in other centers did not control at all what students threw in the trash. Clearly, the actual consumption of food is largely influenced by "the level of tolerance" of the lunch room monitors, in terms of the leftovers, and dependent on the flexibility of the rules of the cafeteria.

Definitively, there are no doubts that the social environment plays an important role in children's

behavior, in relation to both actual food intake and leftovers. Along the same line, the social exchange around a table, and between tables, has a direct impact on the actual consumption by the students. Data obtained during our observations of cafeterias show that students dining at the same table ate similar foods and consumed similar portions. It appears the most important factor in the change and socialization of children's food tastes is the influence of their own peers (Fischler, 1995: 100). In a 1980 study by scholar Birch, younger children were more affected by their peers' actions than older children.

- **3.2. Environmental stimuli of the cafeteria**

The work of Cervera and Palma (1998: 36) emphasizes the importance of a well decorated cafeteria. They suggest bright colors and, if possible, direct sunlight. The furniture and dishes should be nice and inviting, as well as the presentation of the food. However, the authors recognize that the reality in Spain is quite different than the ideal. Cafeterias most often are large dining areas, with huge tables, and plates that clatter, creating a rather stressful atmosphere where one must shout to be heard by their fellow diners.
We have observed that schools tend to have at least minimal decoration in the cafeterias; either posters, movie posters, drawings, photographs, or art work made by the students. According to a study by Bell and Meiselman (1995), hanging posters with messages promoting "healthy food habits" seem to lead to healthier food choices by the students, with a higher intake of fruits and vegetables and less red meat. The brightness of the dining area is another factor that appears to influence the eating habits of the diners – an extremely bright atmosphere makes one eat faster, compared with a softer lit environment (Stroebele and De Castro, 2004).

A study by Ferber and Cabanac (1987) showed that exposure to unpleasant noise not only increases blood pressure and heart rate but also affects the amount of food eaten. In this manner, in a study by Roset i Elias (1998: 129), the noise in cafeterias stood out as the most negatively valued characteristic of lunch time among children ages 6-14. During our observations, we saw at times it is the lunch room monitors themselves who contribute to the noisy environment by shouting at the children to be quieter (*Shhhhhh!; Quiet!!!*, sometimes in a fairly aggressive tone). On the other hand, some schools have found more creative ways to maintain order: for example, sing a song or applaud. When the lunch room monitors start to sing or applaud, the children know to lower their voices and calm down.

The amount of time delegated for a meal is another important behavioral element concerning the consumption of food. We have seen that often students appeal for more time to eat, especially because the quantity of food served is frequently regarded as excessive. The time allocated for lunch in schools is part of a social schedule that can be different from a student's normal schedule and often requires a period familiarization. Even though most children complain about the excessive food portions, some on the other hand, feel they are served too little. However, concerns over large portions sizes are often related to dishes they dislike.

Concerning the tableware used in the cafeterias, based on what we have observed, students in general prefer plates (for example made of hard plastic or glass) over aluminum trays. In a Barcelona elementary school, an 8 year old girl complained about the use of aluminum trays, explaining "[The tray] *is too big for me. It's very heavy. I don't like them, they're ugly, it's like we are in a prison. We want real plates!*" The girl then led us to the room next to the cafeteria, where the lunch room monitors and teachers eat. "Look," she explained, "they have the table set nicely, with plates…they eat something different…We want a table like that, with plates!" Other students from this same school shared the similar opinion that the trays used by the cafeteria made them feel like it was a "prison". Others explained that the trays appeared "dirty" due to the dents and scratches caused by long term use, which made them seem "gross."

- **3.3. Gender, age and food preferences**

Boys and girls do not eat in the same way. Their perceptions of the body and their esthetic ideals are different and thus reflected in their food choices. However, concerning the contents of the meals, standard menus vary little, if at all, in function of gender and/or age (Observatorio de la Alimentación, 2004). It is not uncommon to see the same amount of food served to elementary school students as to high school teenagers. According to our observations, pre-school children generally leave the most leftovers. Often, uneaten food is a reflection of the time a student takes to familiarize himself/herself to a new space and new foods, particularly if flavors and preparations are different

from one's home. Indeed, according Pelchat and Pliner (1995), older students respond more positively to new foods than younger students. These variables of age and gender play an important role in understanding the certain acceptance or refusal of a food, and particular taste preferences among students.

In the same way, the organoleptic characteristics of food (texture, color, smell, etc.) significantly influence the food choices of students. The presentation of a product can contribute to the rejection or acceptance by the consumer. However, the visual qualities and taste of dishes are generally negligible in school cafeteria menus, which tend to offer simplified dishes, in terms of flavor and preparation (Observatorio de la Alimentación, 2004). Also, the amount of leftovers, or uneaten food, from the students' lunches is more closely related to preparation of a dish rather than the ingredients themselves. For example, fish, when served as a stew for the first course, will commonly be rejected by school children. Yet, when served as a second course in the form of fish fingers, it is generally enjoyed.

- **3.4. "School food" *versus* "home food"**

It is common for students to draw comparisons between "school food' and "home food." The acceptance of forms of preparation and cooking appear to create a level of tension between the two "food spheres" (Observatorio de la Alimentación, 2004). During a group discussion with an elementary school in Cardona (Catalonia, Spain), a 10 year old girl explained, "*Cafeteria salad is not salad, it's just lettuce. My mother makes a salad with onion, carrot, olives, cheese, apple, pear, everything!*" We have also observed comparisons among students between "a cafeteria lunch" and what they understand as "a real lunch." This distinction can be in relation to the preparation of the courses or the form of serving them. Concerning a lunch served in her cafeteria, a 12 year old student from a Barcelona school explained, "*Cuban rice* ("Arroz a la cubana") *without an egg is not Cuban rice, so they can't say that today this dish is on the menu.*" Another classmate commented, "*….they make "paella" in a big pot, covered with a top, but that's not a real "paella". We want it like in a restaurant! They don't even add seafood, only peas and a little meat… it's not a "paella*"." (boy, 12 years old, Barcelona)

The socio-cultural context can add indirect pressure on a child and have considerable effects over his/hers food preferences. This pressure is manifested by a system of rules and regulations that restrict the variety of food a child might otherwise try (Fischler, 1995: 96) In other words, a food culture acts within the existing food parameters of an individual, limiting their breadth of experience. Unfortunately, it seems that gastronomic diversity is not a huge concern within the context of the school cafeteria.

We observed another kind of conflict occurred in a Barcelona school where the majority of the student population was of Latin American descent. In the cafeteria of this school, the first and second course was served at the same time, in an aluminum tray with divided compartments. The students had the tendency to continuously turn the tray back and forth, eating the first and second course at the same time. The exasperated monitors would yell that the "correct way" to eat the meal is "*First you eat the first course, and then you eat the second course.*" This order is the normal Spanish custom for a meal. However, the monitors did not take into account that the students may have not been used to this tradition, if in their Latin American households meals are eaten without distinguishing between a first and second course.

If we review the different guidelines for school meal published by the autonomous communities of Spain, we note that they provide surprisingly little information on diversity. Much attention is paid to the importance of caution when dealing with children who suffer certain food allergies, intolerance or illness (celiac disease, diabetes). However, there is little reference to the potential for ethnic or religious diversity among students in the cafeteria. To give an example, regarding celiac disease, allergies to egg and lactose, the guide edited by the autonomous community of Galicia explains: "*The students should not feel excluded from scholastic activities due to their illness.*" No recommendation is found regarding students' feelings of exclusion due to their nationality or religion.

The school cafeterias guide published by the autonomous community of Castile La Mancha in 2006, dedicates 16 pages to discuss gluten intolerance and diabetes. It explains, "*The menus offered to those students [with gluten intolerance or diabetes] will be as similar as possible to the menu offered to the rest of the students. In doing so, they will learn what foods to avoid while not feeling left out or discriminated against.*" Yet on the topic of immigrant children, the only reference

suggests: "*Take into account the possible religious and ethnic differences within the school when designing specific lunch menus. If certain foods are prohibited by a student's culture or religion, equivalent foods should be used as an alternative source of nutrients.*" Although, from what we have observed up to now, another equivalent food is not always prepared. Sometimes the alternative options can be significantly different. One example of this was observed in a school in the province of Barcelona. One day, the first course of the lunch menu was "arroz tres delicias" (a kind of Cantonese rice) and a Muslim preschool student was simply served white rice. Later that week, while the other students happily ate a first course of pizza with cheese and ham, the Muslim student was served a plate of boiled potatoes and carrots.

- **3.5. The relationship between students and lunch room monitors**

The lunch room monitor is the key figure to ensure, first that the students consume a nutritionally balanced meal, as proposed by the menus, and secondly, that they comply with the rules and standards of behavior of the dining hall. They are also responsible for assuring that students follow sanitary habits (wash their hands before and after eating), use utensils properly, maintain proper posture while eating, at least taste all the food, etc. Additionally, due to their proximity to the students the monitors have the authority to mediate conflicts that may arise between the students. Due precisely to this proximity with the students, lunch room monitors shape to a greater or lesser extent the experience and significance that eating in school can represent.

We have observed that some schools have students help the lunch room monitors with their duties in the cafeteria. Student jobs usually involve serving or removing dishes from the table or cleaning the tables at the end of the meal. Students are normally assigned to help on a daily or weekly schedule, depending on how the cafeteria runs. In other schools we have observed the use of older students (pre-adolescent) to help the younger children during their lunch hour. The older students, selected daily by their teacher, help serve water, make sure the younger students sit properly, remind them to use their napkin, behave at the table, etc. In these cases, the younger students respect the older helpers and listen to them. Another method that appears to work is the presence of the classroom teachers who collaborate with the lunch room monitors during the meal time. Their aid seems to facilitate "the negotiation" with students so that they eat correctly, leaving less food on the plate. Teachers also have a closer relationship with their students, command more respect and help maintain a quieter, more orderly atmosphere in the cafeteria. However, lunch room monitors are usually the only ones responsible for accompanying and supervising the students in the cafeteria. Therefore, they play a key role in what the children do or do not eat.

Along this vein, the pleasure of eating for the students is also a condition of the treatment received by the monitors, not simply their relationship with the food itself. The demonstrations of food rejection can be attenuated or accentuated depending on the relationship established between the students and the monitors.

According to Fischler (1995: 110-113), neophobia is an important characteristic in the eating behavior of omnivores. Man manifests neophobia for the first time during childhood, showing strong resistance to try new foods which are unknown or unfamiliar. Yet, the gradual familiarization a new food tends to increase its acceptability. In other words, the repeated introduction of a new foodstuff provided it does not provoke any negative connotations, will progressively reduce or avoid neophobia. Yet, even one bad food experience, either indigestion or another negative reaction, is enough to create a lasting aversion to that food or dish (Garcia, Ervin and Koelling, 1966). It appears that these factors are unfortunately not taken into account in school cafeterias. The rejection of a certain unknown dish by students is often demonstrated through inappropriate behavior or slowness in consumption, which can be interpreted by the lunchroom monitors as misbehavior.

Nevertheless, lunch room monitors can act as excellent incentive figures for children to try new foods, or, they can facilitate the consumption of food normally rejected by students. In one Catalan pre-school, we observed monitors mashing foods most rejected by the children (generally boiled vegetables) and mixing them with other ingredients in order to make the dish easier and more enjoyable to eat. With this technique, for example, green beans, peas or boiled cauliflower were better accepted if mixed with a bit of potato.

A North American study, researching cafeteria workers' views of their influence on students' food

choices, concluded that monitors can play an important role in encouraging children to make healthy choices among the dishes offered in the daily serving line (Fulkerson *et al*, 2002). Adult role models can effectively increase a child's willingness to try new foods (Addessi, Galloway, Visalberghi and Birch, 2005; Harper and Sanders, 1975). Preschool children, especially, respond positively to an enthusiastic teacher demonstrating the acceptance of a new food (Hendy and Raudenbush, 2000).

However, given all the variables of organizing lunch at school (set the tables; serve and distribute the dishes; supervise and aid the students to finish their meal in the allotted time; clear and clean the tables; and, if necessary, organize the dining room for the next group of students), the lunchroom monitor "hardly has the time to teach the students about nutritional value and the discipline '*you have to eat it all*,' in addition to the cultural aspect concerning the pleasure and sociability of a meal" (Gracia and Comelles, 2007, p.74). It is difficult to actually undertake the numerous responsibilities, examples of which are listed in the "School Cafeteria Guide from Programa Perseo" [IV]:

> "Always encourage communication among everyone at the table. Facilitate discussion of students' own experiences as well as commentary about the food being served, where it comes from, why we should eat everything that is served, familiarize students with culinary expressions, help them appreciate the importance of flavors, textures, chewing, etc." (Guía de comedores escolares del Programa Perseo, 2008)

4. In conclusion: What should we really expect from the school cafeteria?

Over the last decade, the autonomous communities of Spain have created guides and manuals about food in schools for educators and parents. Some examples of them we have seen before. Also, in 2010, in a plan from Strategy NAOS (Strategy for Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention) – run in 2005 by the Ministry of Health, Social and Equal Politics, and the Spanish Agency of Food Safety and Nutrition (AESAN) – published a national consensus document about food and nutrition in educational centers. Furthermore, as an integrated part of Strategy NAOS, the Perseo Program published in 2008 its *Guidelines for School Meals*.

A review of these various guides reveal that the themes and topics outlines are basically the same: the recommended intake of calories and nutrients for each scholastic stage; recommendations for designing school menus (how often foods should be served, portion size, cooking techniques, suggestions for the preparation of the lunch menus); how to handle the food hygienically; ways to complement cafeteria meals with those from home, etc. Furthermore, the guides generally emphasize the increase in childhood and adolescent obesity and the "profound social and economic changes" that have impacted our lifestyle and consequently the "deterioration" of our diet. In this context, school cafeterias become an ideal place to learn "healthy eating habits."

According to the discourse of these documents, the cafeteria should transcends its purely nutritional function to become a space of learning and of nutritional education; to learn about taste and senses, an new element to the sphere of education. It is a space that should promote the sociability and pleasure of food and dining. The following are a few examples of this idea:

> "(…) The cafeteria is no longer simply a place that brings together students at lunch time, as a type of welfare service. It has now become a space to create an educational atmosphere and a place of communication to form new relationships, which promotes solidarity and encourages respect and positive coexistence." (*Guía alimentaria para los comedores escolares de Castilla y León. Junta*

[IV] "Pilot Program of School Reference for Health and Exercise for the Prevention of Obesity", activated in 2007 by the Ministry of Health, Social Policies and Equality and the Ministry of Education, with the support of Regional Ministries of Health and Education of the six autonomous communities with a high prevalence of childhood obesity: Andalusia, the Canaries, Castile and León, Extremadura, Galicia, Region of Murcia, and the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla.

de Castilla y León, Consejería de Educación V).

> "The cafeteria is a good space to gradually introduce new foods and preparations, as part of the process of educating the palate and teaching about the pleasure of eating." (*L'alimentació saludable a l'etapa escolar*, Generalitat de Catalunya, Departament d'Educació, Departament de Salut, 2005 VI).

> "The school cafeteria should promote the knowledge of food, culinary tradition, and a taste for recipes from the different regions of the country, including Madrid, or different cultures. It is an important tool in nutrition education." (*Programa de comedores escolares*. Consejería de Educación de la Comunidad de Madrid, 2000 VII)

The examples discussed in this paper, from both direct observations and analysis of guidebooks about food in schools, teach us the considerable discrepancy between actual practices surrounding the cafeteria and discourses of how they should be. The idealized model of a cafeteria found in the guides depict a pleasant, harmonious space where students eat a balanced meal while at the same time learn about the nutritional value of their food. Their individual preferences and eating routines are respected, and communication and conviviality among diners is encouraged. However, this ideal strikes a grand contrast to the actual (and strict) standards of cafeteria conduct and the constraints that characterize lunchtime at school. It seems that this dichotomy occurs because such discussions do not address the complexity of food – understood here as a complete social element (Mauss, 1923) - because to eat well is associated simply with nutrition.

The guides emphasize the importance of the cafeteria to promote healthy eating habits but they do not explain how exactly this responsibility should be carried out. How can the cafeteria be a place for learning about food and eating? How does one teach in the dining space and furthermore, how does one learn in the dining space? The cafeteria guides offer recommendations in relation to the functioning and organization of the space but they do not take into consideration the socio-cultural contexts that influence eating or not eating.

Perhaps a starting point would be to take into account that eating is not simply to ingest nutrients, but also meanings. Humans eat within a cultural space. Food, cuisine, the kitchen, and the ways to gather around a table are culturally determined and they place the diner in a social universe. Social ties are woven through food (Poulain, 2002: 177). Thus, "to share certain habits or food preferences creates a sense of identity and community. In this way, one could say that food also feeds the heart, the mind, and the soul." (Contreras and Gracia, 2005: 89).

When a diner consumes the properties of a meal, it is not just an act of eating. The diner is simultaneously absorbed into a culinary system and the group to which that system, or tradition, belongs. Food shapes and nourishes the diner. It is then natural that a diner looks to build himself through eating. Taking this into consideration, one understands the necessity of identifying food (Fischler, 1995: 68-69). In school cafeterias this becomes quite evident: one of the principal factors for eating threatening is not being able to identify it, to not understand what one is eating. Common student reactions to culinary unknowns: "*There are too many vegetables in the lentils and other things, we don't even know what they are*" (boy, 9 year old) or, "*Sometimes the hamburger is a weird color, like part of it is white…which we have to get rid of with a fork*" (boy, 12 year old).

Within the context of school cafeterias and the actual student consumption of school meal, food preferences and aversions show the dichotomy between nutrition and the social experience of eating. This dilemma can be resolved by recognizing the intrinsic link between both important dimensions of lunchtime. (Observatorio de la Alimentación, 2004).

It is also important to remember that lunchtime at school cafeteria is developed in a closed place and marked by a certain time (therefore it is a both

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V *Food guide for school cafeterias of Castile-Leon* . Governmentof Castile-Leon. Education Council, 2005.

VI *Healthy diet during the school years*. Goverment of Catalonia. Department of Education, Department of Health, 2005.

VII *Food Program for school cafeterias,* Educational Council of the Comunity of Madrid, 2000.

spatially and temporarily limited place) and happens between the morning classes and the playground that comes after it. But this space's nature doesn't share properly the same codes of conduct of the classroom and neither the recreational character of the playground: the school cafeteria has its own nature which needs to be deeper explored, investigated, cared, observed, but this should not be related to what is *expected* from this place, but related to what is *constructed*, actually, every day, inside it.

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Defining pleasure toward individual familiarity level: The case of gourmet meal

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Abstract

This paper deals with pleasure and presents results from a doctoral research interested in meal experience in the context of fine-dining restaurants. Consumption experience is defined as an interaction between an object and a person (Filser, 2008), providing emotions, sensations and meaning to consumers. We wish to explore in this paper one specific experiential topic, pleasure. Thanks to the analysis of a double collection of qualitative data, results show a significant difference between categories of consumers according to one characteristic: individual familiarity level. Pleasure seems to be a major descriptor of a meal experience for more familiar customers (experts). Concerning less familiar customers (novices), pleasure is considered as a global and physical feeling, related with discovery, newness and rarity of an unique experience process. Results may help restaurant managers and Chefs to understand better their customers, and provide optimal pleasure to their different categories of clientele.

Keywords: pleasure, gourmet meal experience, individual familiarity, qualitative data.

1. Introduction

This paper aims to explore the several subjective definitions of "pleasure" in the context of gourmet meal, according to individual familiarity of customers. We are looking at guests of gastronomic (or "fine-dining") restaurants in an exclusive perspective. In other words, our fieldwork is constituted of customers visiting high-ranged restaurants worldwide. Material is provided by a qualitative research in a doctoral study on guest experience exploration. Interviews are only conducted with guests of gourmet restaurants, in order to collect information on their past gourmet meal experiences; many data dealing with pleasure can be extracted from these storytellings. We are interested in knowing differences of interpretation between novice and expert guests when they testify on experienced pleasure during meals. This article starts with a literature review based on pleasure in the specific field of marketing and experiential perspective of consumption, and then explains the design of our study. Main results show differences between individuals while describing pleasure. Several limitations are presented and discussion leads to both academic and operational perspectives.

2. Definition(s) of pleasure?

2.1. Experiential consumption and pleasure

Defining pleasure has always been a main issue in the consumer behavior theory. Literally, "pleasure" is a spontaneous, ephemeral and subjective feeling, defined as a kind of contentment provided by external sources[I]: an "affective state, long-lasting, provided by the satisfaction of a need, a desire, or the achievement of a positive activity"[II] (). This definition implies that everyone may obviously feel pleasure differently. It is an important point in an experiential perspective of consumption, as initiated by Holbrook and Hirschman (1982). Indeed, thanks to the innovative article of these authors, consumer behavior studies have evolved from a "rational" consideration of the consumption to an "experiential" one, where individual response system to a stimulus integrates pleasure as an output. Consumer behavior researches explain the pleasure notion as an emotional and affective reaction of consumption (Derbaix & Poncin, 2005) leading to hedonic benefits (e.g. Havlena & Holbrook, 1986). Pleasure is the basis of a measurement scale of subjective experience, which defines the welfare degree of an individual, related to a positive state (Lichtlé & Plichon, 2005). In some ways, level of pleasure may lead to individual satisfaction: pleasure (or displeasure) tends to be a major point in every experience, whatever the context. It provides satisfaction as a consequence of a consumption episode (hedonic-sensorial dimension) (Roederer, 2008). This author shows this pleasure is a component in the building of individual satisfaction. The experiential view is pleasure-oriented; it implies a deep research of hedonic components of consumption. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) theorized experiential consumption as being a permanent "pursuit of pleasure", because an experience is built on individual meanings and feelings afterwards. In other words, individuals who might not wish to reach the same goal while consuming might consider each consumption episode differently. There is an intrinsic motivation that positions this experiential consumption behavior in a hedonic dimension. Thus, consumption is said to be "an end in itself" in contrast with utilitarian behavior (Lofman, 1991).

2.2. Meal science and pleasure

Eating is often considered as a consumption episode, which may be pleasurable, combining utilitarian benefits (not being hungry anymore) and hedonic consequences (Havlena & Holbrook, 1986). In the study of touristic experiences, for example, food offer is seen as an added pleasurable value in experiences, either thanks to discovery process or to high quality offers (Quan & Wang, 2004). In a restaurant, when the offer reaches customer's expectations, the experience gets pleasurable for customers and has positive consequences (e.g. Andersson & Mossberg, 2004). Hanefors et al. (2003) uses the concept of "outer zone" to describe an extraordinary (meal) experience, when satisfaction is at the end of the experiential process (Hanefors & Mossberg, 2003). Actually, the consumption of a product (or a service) reaches an experiential dimension when it provides pleasure, memories, and meanings to the consumer (Kwortnik et al., 2007, in Filser, 2008). Regarding the production side, pleasure is obviously the main objective of Chefs when they are asked about the finality of their work (Balazs, 2001).

Another literature review on meal theories and foodservice could also help to position pleasure as a factor of satisfaction and experience. Some models describe a meal experience as the combination of tangible and intangible elements providing satisfaction and delight. For instance,

[I] Larousse, 2004

[II] Translation from the On-line "Trésors de la Langue Française", 1994.

Andersson and Mossberg (2004) propose a representation of meal components depending on their roles into the "experience", which means the implication of each element either to satisfaction or to experiential dimension. Satisfaction is reached by coherence with expectations, whereas experiential dimension concerns rather transcendence of expectations. Some meal components provide feelings and meanings, going over utilitarian or satisfactions' benefits (Andersson & Mossberg, 2004). An experience must pass over "daily levels of emotional intensity" (Allen et al., 2008): pleasure is one of the "must have" in every consumption experience, which implicates individuals and leaves traces in minds. Obviously, it is limited to explore experiential consumption only in studying customer satisfaction (Hanefors & Mossberg, 2003). But does every customer define pleasure in the same way? The references of pleasure are they different? Can we observe several manners of interpreting pleasure according to consumer's level of familiarity, comparing individual interpretations of past experiences? We have set up a qualitative study exploring guest experience phenomenon in the context of gourmet meals. Thanks to collected verbatim, a lot of storytellings from guests mention pleasure as a consequence of a nice experienced meal. However, we observe that respondents do not explain the notion of pleasure in the same way, depending on their past experiences, so-called level of familiarity.

3. Design of the qualitative study: storytellings of past meal experiences

In the experiential perspective of consumption, a subjective description of a phenomenon by an individual might be considered as a relevant interpretation of reality (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). So, asking people on their own feelings is a way to understand them better. As our project aims at identifying memorized elements of a gastronomic meal experience, we have chosen to collect qualitative data describing this phenomenon within two phases: an open-interview process and a semi-structured interview process. Our approach is close to many other methods used to understand individual experiences thanks to narratives, such as storytellings (Mossberg, 2008) or personal reports (Carù et Cova, 2006, Lofman, 1991).

▪ 3.1. Preliminary phase: exploring meal experience

A sample of customers has been recruited to participate to individual open-interviews based on storytelling of their past meal experiences in gourmet restaurants. Respondents have not been selected regarding their profiles or consumption habits, in order not to get biases on information categories. 17 exploratory interviews have been conducted (all not being treated here), using an interview guideline built on two steps: first of all, respondents were requested to tell the story of their last gourmet meal in a precise context: the restaurants of Grands Chefs Relais & Châteaux[III]. Then, they were asked to give information on their personal relationship with gastronomy universe: are they interested in gastronomy and curious to get information, do they practice cooking, do they have friendly or professional relationships with Chefs or staff of this environment, etc. This aimed at identifying whether people got different interpretation according to their familiarity degree or declared closeness with gastronomy.

▪ 3.2. Structured phase: meal experience and individual familiarity

The second interview process has been built on observations and results from exploratory interviews. Guideline has been reinforced thanks to experiential categories identified in the previous qualitative analysis (environment, persons, and products) and followed the meal process (from welcoming in the restaurant until departure). We wished to learn more about the meal in itself, therefore we did not chose to look at pre-experience (mood, needs and expectations) or post-experience (positive or negative consequences); we focused on the meal as "consumed". During face-to-face interviews, respondents were free to develop each theme presented by the interviewer. Familiarity topic has also been integrated in the second interview guideline, including an original way of getting knowledge on individual familiarity: interviewees were asked to define themselves as familiar or not (amateur, connoisseur or expert), so that we could have real and reflexive descriptors on this concept. Moreover, our second sample of respondents has been recruited worldwide; we collected interviews from French-, English- and German-speaking guests. Lexical issues should be passed over,

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thanks to back translation method used for updating interview guidelines.

In the foodservice papers, an increase in expert behaviors is observed (such as "Foodies"), although every eater does not have the same level of knowledge or dedicated vocabulary to speak about food and wine (Morgan, Watson & Hemmington, 2008). This phenomenon is also stated in the study of public journals specialized in gastronomy critics (Hetzel, 1999). In our research, respondents have been characterized thanks to their consumption frequency of gourmet meals, named respectively "Beginners" (less than 3 meals), "Explorers" (at least 10 meals whatever the location) and "Loyals" (at least 5 meals in the same restaurant). Whereas our exploratory phase ignored pre-selection on respondents' profiles, we based our categorization for the second phase on a measurable indicator: the frequency of fine-dining restaurants visits. This might characterize punctually the familiarity level and is an exclusive indicator. We obtained objective segments, capable to gather different levels of experiences. Our segmentation also responds to strategic purposes on clientele. Previous articles have shown the influence of past experiences in the way restaurants customers interpret the performance or quality of the restaurant, leading to behavioral intentions and satisfaction. Past experiences have an influence on quality perception: experienced customers (i.e. with high frequency) are more sensitive to environmental attributes rather than tangible ones, which are on the contrary more important for novices (Kwun & Oh, 2006). We followed this categorization method to contrast experienced and novice guests. As far as we know, individual familiarity is rather defined as a frequency of individual exposures within the same context. Each person gets unique reactions facing an event or a situation; therefore, no one can be sure of having the same intensity of emotions or using the same lexicon to explain his/her feelings. Our results make the bridge on references used to manipulate the notion of pleasure in each narrative, by considering familiarity level as a distinctive and moderator parameter. Marketing literature defines commonly familiarity as the consequence of an action (e.g. Roederer, 2008), which is repeated (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987), and enhances expertise as one goes along (Söderlund, 2002). Cognitive science regards expertise as the development of frequency of exposure, specialization of individuals, qualification and associated values within a situation (Farrington-Darby et al., 2006). In our opinion, these definitions might be limited, because familiarity could also be considered as a form of "attachment" and/or "involvement" (Bowden, 2009). Literature shows also some semantic specificity due to expertise: for example, experts use rather physical attributes to describe a complex product (Didellon-Carsana & Jolibert, 1999). Looking forward to managerial implication, we think this categorizing guests on their past experiences can help managers to optimize restaurants offers in enhancing proper attributes mentioned by different segments of customers.

48 persons were volunteers to participate to an interview. The majority of the recordings has been transcribed, and followed the process of qualitative data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 2003). A global content analysis has been conducted, supported by a coding work and external verification (double analysis and participant check, as suggested by Miles and Huberman, 2003). Coding has been processed using different approaches. First of all, a general reading pointed out all recurrent elements cited by interviewees, constituting themes and sub-categories; for example, one theme concerned "Food and Drinks", subdivided into several sub-categories, such as "Discovery", "Aesthetic", "Simplicity", etc. Then, other transcriptions have been coded on this model. This method is inspired of the qualitative data analysis recommendations of Miles and Huberman's (2003). For some specific themes, coding tables have been built to read information vertically and horizontally, using Giannelloni and Vernette's method (2001). In other words, this method helps to get a general overview of the presence of a theme (global recurrences) simultaneously with a deep reading of each interview (individual occurrences). An external researcher helped to verify the coding afterwards and commented the existing coding tables. Three participants to an interview were also asked to check the analysis made on their testimonials to ensure the quality of our interpretation (Blais & Martineau, 2006).

4. Exploratory results: a focus on physical and experiential pleasure

A large diversity of themes has been identified thanks to content analysis. One emergent category concerns emotional content extracted from storytellings, regrouping respondents' expression of feelings and sensations to qualify their memories of meal experiences. Our interest is to focus on use and definitions regarding different customers' profiles to explain pleasure. Following results present verbatims from our interviews, regardless of age, gender or spoken language of respondents. However, verbatims have been translated from French or German into English to facilitate the reading.

In the following illustrations, "novice guests" name respondents with few gourmet meal experiences (less than 3 meals), whereas "expert guests" have more past experiences. Distinguishing these two populations in the way they use the word "pleasure" permits to observe several divergences or convergences between novices' and experts' testimonials.

- **4.1. Pleasure as a physical state of feeling**

Firstly, "novice" respondents seem to consider pleasure as an intangible element of their experience, which is often physically felt:
P9: "Nevertheless, I think that everything together creates also an atmosphere where people come for the exceptional side of the thing, but in the same time for pleasure. However, I could not define it, but you have… people are smiling, actually!" [IV]

This respondent feels not to be able to give the reasons for pleasure, but interprets it as a physical appearance (here, observing people "smiling", which is an obvious consequence of pleasure).
Other verbatim show that pleasure is considered as inverse of ill-being in the global experience and its motivations:
P9: "there is no reason I could feel ill-at-ease, especially in a restaurant, especially in a high-range restaurant, actually, it is a place where you are really not supposed to feel bad. You go there for pleasure, why would you be ill-at-ease?" [V]

For this respondent, pleasure should be a positive motivation; in the way it avoids all negative feelings. Pleasure does not refer with tangible aspects for novice guests. Pleasure concerns a general feeling, which can be described physically, without having any concrete explanation.

- **4.2. Pleasure as an experiential input**

On the other hand, considering "expert guests", collected testimonials indicate more precise elements when they mention pleasure. Some people consider pleasure as a specific reference of the experience, characterizing the experiential process:

P16: "There are three pleasures, first of all, the visual one, the oral presentation, and then the tasting. (…) So it is a long-lasting pleasure!" [VI]

Pleasure is also associated with food and eating in general, considered as an action:
P14: "A pleasure, our pleasure, my wife and I, is good food, we like… I even missed my vocation, I should have been restaurateur, I have already cooked at home, I like it." [VII]

Considering food to be the first obvious motive for going in a gourmet restaurant, we observe a kind of association between an experiential process and an expected pleasure.

5. Second results: pleasure as a parameter of an overall experience building

- **5.1. Pleasure as a constitutive element of the meal**

In our second phase, pleasure seems to take part in the definition of the meal. Asking interviewees to give a spontaneous description of a "meal in a gourmet restaurant", we observed that one third of the respondents used the keyword "pleasure" to evoke such a concept.
To describe a meal, a respondent use a significant sentence: "[These are] intense events, for senses pleasure exaltation, all combined with each other"VIII. This extract shows the importance of global expression of the meal experience as to be linked with existing pleasure.
Pleasure is an implicit parameter that describes every aspects of what is considered as a meal in the context of gastronomy, on one hand considering expert guests:
R6: "And it must really be a show, as well as concerning service as into the plate, it is pleasure. We say, okay, it is only food, it is only feeding oneself, but truly it is not only food, it is not only feeding oneself. It is a real enjoyment, it's the pleasure of discovering an unknown taste, it's the pleasure of discovering a new way of presenting a dish, it's a gift, which the team, the chef wants to bring. A message, hum, it remains a real pleasure. [IX]

[IV] P9 : "Malgré tout, je pense que l'ensemble fait aussi que tu as une ambiance où les gens viennent pour le côté exceptionnel, mais en même temps pour le côté plaisir, quoi. Ca, par contre, je pourrai pas le définir, mais t'as le côté… les gens sont souriants, quoi !"
[V] P9: "il n'y a pas de raison que je me sente mal à l'aise, encore moins dans un restaurant, encore moins dans un restaurant encore plus haut de gamme, finalement, c'est encore moins un endroit où tu dois te sentir mal à l'aise. Tu y vas pour du plaisir, pourquoi tu serais mal à l'aise ?"

[VI] P16 : "Donc il y a trois plaisirs d'abord le visuel, la présentation verbale, et puis après la dégustation. (…) Donc c'est un plaisir qui dure !"
[VII] P14 : "Un plaisir, notre plaisir, à mon épouse et moi, c'est la bonne chère, on aime bien, j'ai même raté ma vocation, j'aurais dû être restaurateur, c'est déjà moi qui fait la popote à la maison, j'aime bien."
[VIII] P17: "Des temps forts, pour l'exaltation de plaisir des sens, tous combinés les uns avec les autres."
[IX] R6: "Et ça doit être vraiment un spectacle, aussi bien dans le service que dans l'assiette, c'est du plaisir. On se

In this example, pleasure could explain the difference of such a gourmet meal compared with a meal, which only aimed at "feeding oneself". Some elements are expressed exponentially because of the implication of pleasure.
Novices consider also this meal experience as implicitly dependant of pleasure, because it is linked with sensory stimulation:
R1: "I don't know, a discovery, the idea of having new things…with tastes, etc. There is a kind of pleasure, an excitement of all senses…I could compare it with a trip in a foreign country. We smell odours, we observe panoramas, and in the same time, the unique and exceptional aspect confers a different attention paid, we enjoy"[X]

For this respondent, pleasure seems to be harder to describe ("*a kind of pleasure*"), but means nevertheless something new and interactive with the experience itself.

- **5.2. Pleasure as an imperative or expecting parameter for an extraordinary experience**

Pleasure is shown to be also a constitutive element of the global experience itself, either in the choice and the associated consequences, or dedicated to some previous expectations.
Expert guests can define pleasure as the main factor of the success of an experience, which leads to consumption and choice:
R13: "The most important [thing] is pleasure. I mean, if you had pleasure… And if we had a lot of pleasure, we even tend to order a something more"[XI]

For novice respondents, the word pleasure is more related with the rarity of such a meal experience. It has not to be consumed too often, in order to maintain the extraordinary and pleasurable aspects of this kind of meal:
R7: "Maybe not every week neither, otherwise there will be not this notion of pleasure anymore (…), it must be an impressive event, and experience (…) a moment of joy"[XII]

Even if a great meal in a Grand Chef's restaurant might be an experience, which creates fantasy and expectations, respondents prefer having it rarely, in order to keep an intact pleasure each time.

6. Discussion: pleasure in the meal experience and guest's familiarity

Furthermore, our results can help to observe the differences in pleasure interpretations between gourmet meals' consumers according to their familiarity degree. The following preliminary figure could be an entrance to understanding and positioning pleasure in a gourmet meal experience according to individual familiarity level (**Figure 1**).

dit tiens, euh, c'est, c'est, ce n'est que de la nourriture, euh, ce n'est que alimentaire, mais ce n'est au fond pas que de la nourriture, et ce n'est pas que de l'alimentaire. C'est euh, c'est une, c'est une vraie fête, c'est le plaisir de découvrir une saveur qu'on ne connait pas, c'est le plaisir de découvrir une manière de présenter un plat, c'est euh, c'est un don, c'est ce que veulent donner un équipe, un chef. Euh, un message, euh, ça ça reste reste un, un, un vrai plaisir."

[X] R1: "Je ne sais pas, une découverte, l'idée d'avoir des choses nouvelles… avec les saveurs etc. il y a une sorte de plaisir, une excitation des sens… je comparerais ça à un passage dans un pays étranger. On hume les odeurs, déguste les saveurs, on regarde les paysages et en même temps le côté unique et exceptionnel fait qu'on a une autre attention, on profite."

[XI] R13: "Le plus important c'est le plaisir. Je veux dire, si vous avez eu du plaisir... Et si on a eu beaucoup de plaisir, on a même tendance à vouloir reprendre un petit truc en plus"

[XII] R7: "Non peut-être pas toutes les semaines non plus parce que après il n'y aurait peut-être plus cette notion de plaisir, (…) Que ça reste quand même un évènement marquant, une expérience, (…) un moment de joie".

Novice guests	Experts guests
GLOBAL FEELING OF AN UNIQUE EXPERIENCE	FACTOR OF EXPERIENCE CONSTITUTION
Pleasure = physical state and rarity	Pleasure = linked with aspects of the meal
Pleasure = contrary of being ill-at-ease	Pleasure = experiential process
Pleasure = sensory stimulation	Pleasure = factor of choice
Implicit parameter of an experience	

Figure 1: expression of pleasure in the storytellings of gourmet restaurants' guests according to individual familiarity

Indeed, we observe specific uses of pleasure as a reference. We wonder if pleasure could be a descriptive aspect of a gourmet meal experience, rather than an "implicit expectation". As our methodology implies individual testimonials, we never used directly the word "pleasure" during the interviews to get specific information from our respondents, but interviewees have always spontaneously mentioned it. In our results, pleasure seems to be a common sensible aspect, easily expressed as remembered, but relatively hard to define and specify. The basis of pleasure depends on intrinsic characteristics of individuals and could also be explained by other extended parameters, such as occasion (whether persons go in a gourmet restaurant for a special motive), previous mood (being anxious, excited, curious, etc.) and, obviously, state of mind during the meal. We did not aim at exploring the situational expression of pleasure. Therefore, it might be important to take into account the different definitions or uses of the pleasure in our context, even if our sample is not truly representative of every experience. We admit we never had a negative interpretation of a meal experience, expressing "displeasure". Consensus exists only on the basic positive dynamics of pleasurable feelings.
These results validate one of the major parameters of a consumption experience (Roederer, 2008), during which consumers get a subjective response to a stimulus. Affective consequences of an experience are thus different according to individual interpretation of the situation (*person x object x situation* paradigm) (Punj & Stewart, 1983). In another way, these verbatim may help to understand the referent points of pleasure according to the level of knowledge a person can have of a particular context. If pleasure is considered to be an implicit aspect of meal experience, thus it may represent and confirm the hedonic part of consumption: pleasure being one of the responses of individual experiential process (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). As pleasure shall make the bridge between feelings and satisfaction (Roederer, 2008), thus this research can help to observe diversity of definitions or aspects of pleasure, which could help further scientific investigations and operational applications.

7. Limits of our research

Several aspects of our research appear to be limitative. All the following points have to be taken into account in the interpretation and analysis of the collected verbatim.
First of all, we aim at understanding gourmet meal experiences; therefore our research is focused on this market: we interviewed only gastronomic restaurants' guests on their gourmet experiences. This point might be a limitation on applying recommendations to other sectors or ranges of restaurants. A comparative approach could be set up to contrast gourmet meals aspects with other types of meals.
Secondly, our sample is not large enough to pretend capturing all meanings of pleasure. To avoid this bias, we have set up another methodological approach to cover a larger population and try to standardize our results: a questionnaire has been sent to a consequent guests' database, questioning about the whole memorized meal experience and the associated topics (such as food, environmental or relational parameters). This quantitative analysis is still in progress.
Moreover, we have collected only narratives, which can lead to subjective interpretation and lack of information. For example, respondents might not have told about all theirs past experiences: this could make them change in categories, from novices to experts. This issue could be solved while using a more "reflexive" questioning, asking respondents to describe their own familiarity. Some of the participants may have very old and poorly recalled memories, regarding time length since the experience. We could have chosen other methods to recall more solid memories, for example, implicit and explicit measures (Trendel & Warlop, 2005).

Then, asking people in the context of "Haute Cuisine" can probably provide *social desirability* (Fisher, 1993), influencing respondents not to give their total sincere opinion on experienced situations of consumption (e.g. not to "judge" the restaurant where they had a meal). This bias could also be linked with the positioning of the researcher who conducted the interviews. A complete objectivity is required, which is a difficult exercise, especially when the context is well known

and when the interview process pursuits precise goals.

8. Conclusion: academic and managerial perspectives

Pleasure is often mentioned in verbal testimonials from guests' meal experience. We observe some differences in the way this notion is described or associated with, according to respondent's level of familiarity with our fieldwork, gastronomy and gourmet restaurants. The novices seem to consider pleasure as a global notion, compared with well-being, but well integrated in the experiential definition of a gourmet meal. The experts are rather associating pleasure with tangible facts or time episodes; they seem to be more analytical in their testimonials, integrating pleasure as an implicit part of a global positive experience. These preliminary results need to be strengthened in order to get precisely the distinction between familiarity levels and respondents' interpretations of pleasure. Further research could also explore deeper this relation between familiarity and other feelings, such as fear, using the same comparative approach. Indeed, our verbatim evoke this notion regarding different guests' profiles. Novice guests seem to feel more anxious than experts when visiting gourmet restaurants (Johns & Kivela, 2001), maybe due to little knowledge of 'gastronomic behavioral standards' (e.g. P11: *"it seems to be prestigious, we are afraid of having the wrong behavior"*). Considering such differences between guests according to their familiarity levels could also be a precious lever for companies, which worry about offering the best positive experience to their guests, helping them evacuating their anxiety and enjoying their whole experience. Another research perspective could follow the work of Andersson et al. (2004) who used a comparative approach of ideal vs. experienced meal. This could be helpful in our field to know better guests' expectations in order to give practical recommendations.

In a managerial point of view, this research could be important for settlements of tools in clientele loyalty management. Better knowing customers can lead to strategic communication systems and targeting. Improving parameters, which provide pleasure properly to different segments of customers may be useful while setting up experiential strategies. Indeed, every experience must be memorable end enjoyable to the guests and profitable to the companies (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Moreover, commercial relationships and interactions with guests in restaurant can be improved when information on guests' expectations and priorities are known. Even if subjective emotions and feelings cannot be standardized to everyone, it is always precious to get knowledge on individual behaviors in order to guarantee a high level of guest satisfaction and avoid bad consequences of the experience.

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Theoretical Models of Good Hygiene Practices Training: current approaches and perspectives

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Abstract

Foodborne diseases are a real problem for both public health and food industry managers. Because mishandling is a major cause of infection, Good Hygiene Practices trainings are mandatory for all food workers. Literature data suggests that the efficiency of these trainings is limited. If trainings increase food workers knowledge and behavioral intention, hygiene practices at work are often unchanged. This fact challenges the models used for good hygiene training design.
This article aims to review current theoretical models and to propose a new approach, based upon more psychological aspects of decision making. In this new approach, application of good hygiene practices is vieedw as a decision about sanitary risk: food workers are required daily to take decisions linked to a sanitary risk of food. Actually, food workers seem to have consequent knowledge about these risks but may take bad decisions.
Risk representation and risk perception are known to be important features of this kind of decisions. Thus, they might be a key to understand why, despite knowledge, deviance to good practices occurs.
For this reason, a cognitive approach is proposed to study food workers reasoning and decision making using a psychological theory of decision making under risk and future researches are presented.

Keywords: Food Safety, Hygiene training, Health education model, decision making, risk

1. Introduction

In the past decades, the number of recorded foodborne outbreaks has increased in France from 662 recorded sites in 1998 to 1124 in 2008 (INVS, 2007) - and these numbers represent only the recorded sites. Data on foodborne outbreaks are believed to consistently underestimate their true incidence (Crerar, Dalton, Longbottom, & Kraa, 1996). However, the observed increase does not reflect poorer hygiene practices at work. On the contrary, with the harmonization of Europeans' policies in 2002, food safety is more than ever a preoccupation of professionals, consumers and public policies. Indeed, this increase may be partly attributed to improved surveillance, modern lifestyle and changes in food behaviour. The causes of foodborne outbreaks are well known. They mainly happen in collective catering where workers mishandling is a major cause of infection (INVS, 2006; W.H.O, 2000).
Because foodborne outbreaks could have dramatic consequences (with vulnerable peoples like young children, pregnant women or seniors) leading to hospitalization and sometimes to death, food safety is a very important public health concern. Moreover, outbreaks often lead to important economic losses and sometimes to bankruptcy. For these reasons, food handlers' training appears to be a good strategy for both managers and public policy.

Good hygiene practices training are mandatory for all food workers. These trainings are often based on a simple "Knowledge Attitude Practices" approach, which assumed that an improved knowledge will change workers attitude toward food hygiene and so leads to better practices. This approach is criticized by some authors in the literature who note that cultural, social or psychological aspects of attitudes and practices are not considered (see Rennie, 1995) and that improve knowledge about food hygiene and good practices is insufficient (Tones & Tilford, 1994, Rennie, 1994). More, food hygiene studies give increasing evidences of its limits (Powell et al., 1997; Griffith, 2000; Egan et al. 2007). Improving food workers knowledge of foodborne illness infection agents and of good practices seems not to be enough to really change hygiene practices. The need to understand how psychological aspects like motivation, attitude or health beliefs interact with practices of food workers was also emphasized in 1988 by the World Health Organization (WHO, 1988). Thus, there are evidences for a need of theoretical models. Both researchers and World Health Organization advanced that Health Education Models and psychological theories could build a bridge between knowledge and practices.

In the next section we review some health education models used to understand good practices mechanisms. For each of these models, we give an example of recent study in which these models are adapted and applied to good hygiene training.

2. Theoretical background: health education models in good hygiene practices studies

▪ 2.1. The theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

One of the theories used in some food hygiene training studies is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The theory of Planned Behaviour assumes that intention is the main predictor of behavior (Ajzen, 1991). According to this theory, the Attitude towards the behavior (the degree a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation towards the behaviour) and the Perceived Behavioral Control (the individual's perception of the difficulty of performing the behavior) are linked with the Subjective Norm or normative influence (the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior, for instance: "Consumers are very likely to think I should carry out safe food handling"). They predict Behavioral Intention. Links between these components are presented in figure 1. This theory assumes that if an individual thinks that respect of good hygiene practices are relevant and important for both him/her and other significant peoples and if he/she perceives that these behaviors are feasible, then he/she certainly will have the intention to implement these behaviors.

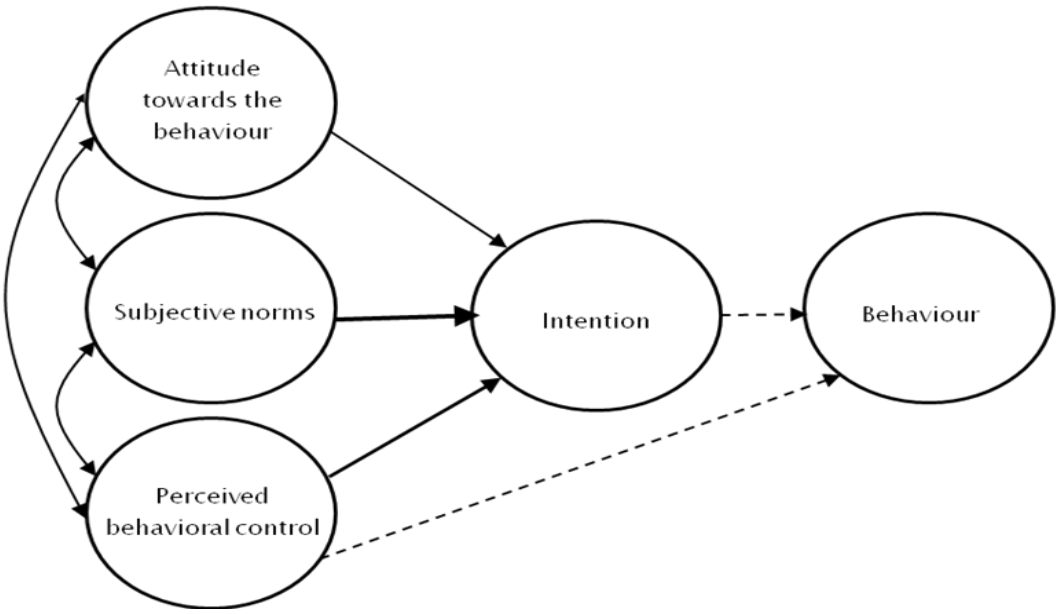


Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behavior, adapted from Ajzen, 1991

The Theory of Planned Behaviour has been used to predict food handlers' compliance to good hygiene recommendations by Mullan and Wong in 2006 and Seaman and Eves in 2010.

Phillip Seaman and Anita Eves study aims to assessing the efficacy of Theory of Planned Behavior in predicting safe food handling practices. They used questionnaires - designed on the principles of the Theory of Planned Behaviour - given to 249 food handlers (quantitative approach) conducted in-and depth interviews with 40 food handlers and 20 managers (qualitative approach). The questionnaire was constructed to assess Attitude, Subjective Norm, Perceived Behavioral Control and Behavioral Intentions of respondents. Interviews gave qualitative data including manager perceptions about improvement of practices in workplace after training. The Seaman and Eves results show that TPB is a relatively good predictor of behavioral intentions. However, a significant part of the variance in intentions remains unaccountable (>50%). Concerning the efficacy of training, this study found a statistical difference between trained and non trained participants in Subjective Norm score, but no significant difference of Attitude and Behavioral Intention scores.

These results are consistent with other studies using the Theory of Planned Behavior to predict behavioral intentions. Data reveals that intentions can be predicted by Subjective Norm, Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control. However, the predictability of behavior based on the theory components seems to be more questionable. Indeed, behavioral intentions are relatively weak predictors of behavioral achievement.

- **2.2. The Health Action Process Approach (HAPA)**

Another social cognition theory used in this field is the Health Action Process Approach (Schwarzer, 1992). The Health Action Process Approach is used in many studies in various areas to explain a diverse range of health behaviors (Garcia and Mann, 2003; Luszczynska, 2004; Schwarzer et al., 2007; Sniehotta, Scholz and Schwarzer, 2005).

The Health Action Process Approach model assumes two phases, named the "motivational" and the "volitional" phase. In other words, this model claims that a behavioral implementation needs motivation and then voluntarism. These two phases are combined in a sophisticated way and their achievement is influenced by specific factors.

The motivational phase links behavioral intention with risk awareness, outcome expectancy and action self-efficacy. Risk awareness is composed by risk awareness severity and risk awareness vulnerability (e.g. the risk must be perceived as serious and probable). Outcome expectancy represents the expected benefits of an action (e.g. any perceived advantage of a specific behavior will increase the intention to implement this behavior). Action self-efficacy is the personal perceived capability to implement the behavior.

The volitional phase follows the intention. The model suggests that the volitional phase is the bridge between intention and behavior. Indeed, during this phase, future behaviors are planned in working memory. This planning process is viewed to be the key to link intention and behavior.

Planned behavior is influenced by perceived capability to maintain the behavior and to the perceived capability to replicate it after a period of absence (see figure 2).

This model has been used by Nieto-Montenegro et al. in 2008 for the development of a Good Hygiene Practices training pilot program. The authors cite other education studies and note that the motivational system is the most likely to improve practices. Thus, they add elements of expectancy theory (ET, see below) to improve the motivational system of the Health Action Model.

Chow and Mullan adapted the Health Action Process Approach model in 2010 in order to predict food hygiene practices. In this study, three additional factors, known to influence food hygiene behavior, complete the model: Subjective Norms (one of the three predictors of behavioral intention in the Theory of Planned Behavior), Social Support (as perceiving support of social group may influence implementation and maintenance of health behavior, see Uchino, 2004) and Past Behavior (Past Behavior may predict 19% of variance in food handling behaviors, see Mullan and Wong, 2009).

The study used two questionnaires. The first one aims to assess the motivational phase and additional components, the second one to assess the volitional phase and additional components. Participants answered the questionnaires with a period of one week between each. Behaviors are assessed by the second questionnaire as the percentage of hygienic meal preparations out of total meal preparations.

Applied on 259 students, the motivational phase with additional components predicts more than 50% of variance in behavioral intention. The volitional phase with additional components predicts 36,8% of variance in behavior.

The Health Action Process Approach, like the Theory of Planned Behavior, seems to be a good predictor of behavioral intentions. However, concerning the power of prediction for behaviors, the results are more nuanced. The extended model used in this study explained almost 40% of variance in behavior, but this good result seems to be due only to the Past Behavior factor: the original model explained only 17% of the variance in behavior.

The Health Action Process Approach model was developed in attempt to bridge the gap between intention and behavior. This study suggests that the original model fails to achieve this goal for food hygiene practices. Indeed, with both the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Health Action Process Approach models, a large part of variance (>50%) in behavior remains unaccountable.

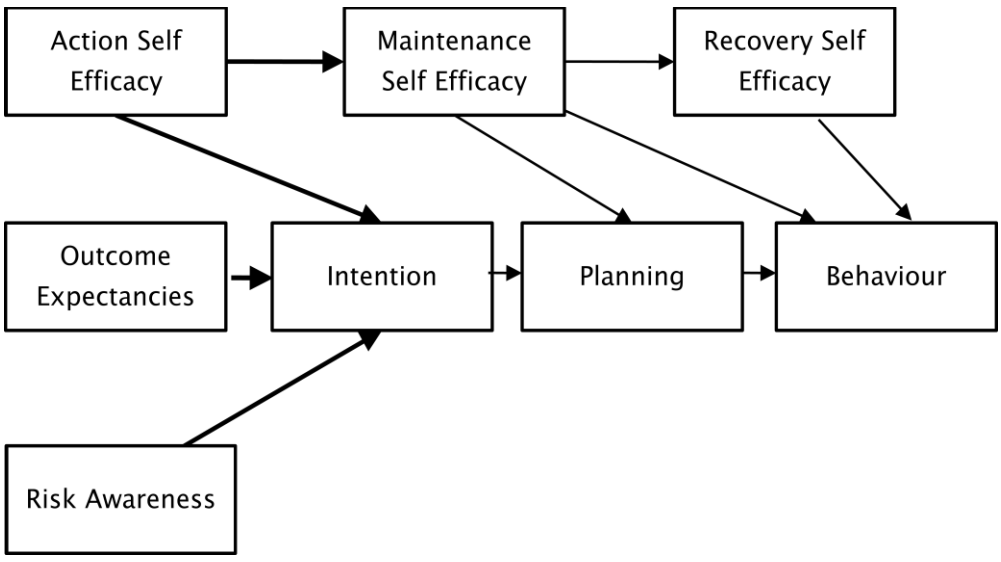


Figure 2: The Health Action Process Approach (HAPA), adapted from Chow, S., Mullan, B. (2010)

- **2.3. The Health Action Model (HAM) and Expectancy Theory (EP)**

The Health Action Model is a model developed by Tones and adjusted by Rennie to be used in the field of food safety (Tones, Tilford and Robinson, 1990; Rennie, 1995). The Health Action Model is considered by some authors to be a good way to develop and to apply food safety education program (Ehiri et al., 1997; Seaman and Eves, 2006). This model identifies 5 different systems influencing the implementation of knowledge in work place:

- The knowledge system represents the baseline food safety knowledge and skills,
- The normative system represents the worksite norms and rules,
- The motivational system is the motivational elements of the company,
- The belief system represents all the values and beliefs of the target audience concerning education program targets,
- The worksite environmental system represents physical conditions in workplace.

These five systems are in complex interaction: the normative system influences both the belief system and the motivational system, the latter influencing for its part the belief system and the behavioral intention. Behavioral intention is view in the Health Action Model as the outcome of the belief system. When physical conditions are good enough (worksite environmental system) and if relevant skills and knowledge are presents (knowledge system), so behavioral intentions could lead to change in practice (see figure 3).

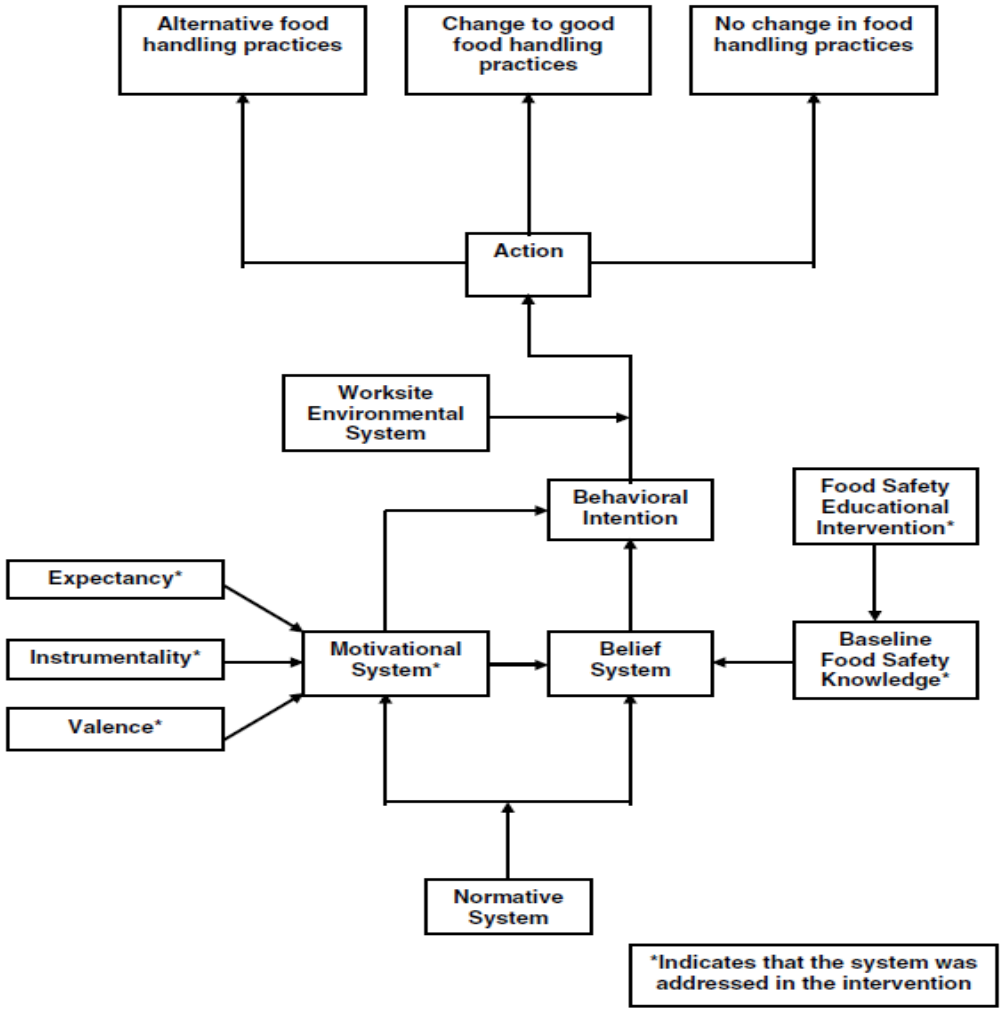
The Expectancy theory (ET) is a theory of the management field used in adult education as well as in industry and organization to motivate people. Expectancy Theory declines motivation into three concepts. As defined by Vroom in 1964 (Campbell & Pritchard, 1983; Tubbs, Boehne, & Dahl, 1993) Expectancy Theory assumes that motivation is composed by:

- The value accorded to the reward offer for good practices (named Valence in the theory),
- The belief that good practice will be noticed and rewarded (named Instrumentality in the theory)
- The belief that greater effort lead to improved performances (named Expectancy in the theory).

Nieto-Montenegro et al. 2008 study aims at developing a new training model based on these two theories (HAM and ET). They insist on the knowledge system and the motivational system. Knowledge system is manipulated by providing a pilot training which aims to increase relevant knowledge and skills, when motivational system is manipulated by increasing the three components of Expectancy Theory: the belief that extra effort will lead to better performance was reinforced (Expectancy), supervisors were incited to notice and reward good performances of workers (Instrumentality) and financial rewards for good practices were given (Valence). This study evaluates the impact of training and motivation manipulations on knowledge and behavior.

The assessment of this training shows an improved knowledge after training and a significant improvement of some practices was enhanced by both training and motivation manipulations. However some limitations are pointed out by the authors revealing that the effects of intervention are difficult to analyze (high compliance rate for some target practices before intervention, pre-existing food safety program or pre-existing food safety culture, observational constraints, etc.).

Figure 3: The Health Action Model, adapt by Rennie (1995) extended and used in Nieto-Montenegro *et al.* study in 2008



- **2.4. Advantages and Limitations of the Health Education Models**

The Theory of Planned Behaviour, the Health Action Model and the Health Action Process Approach are useful tools to understand food hygiene practices. They identified some social and individual factors which may be implicated in good practices application. However, results of studies focusing on the efficacy of these models in predicting or improving behavior seem to show that implementing behavior depends partially on knowledge, motivation and intention but that other parameters must be investigated. These limitations lead us to consider the question of application of good hygiene practices in a different way.

Because risk e.g.: risk perception, risk consciousness, risk awareness- is central in the decision of applying good hygiene practices, we examine in the last section a psychological theory of decision making under risk which can contribute to complete the understanding of the question.

3. Good hygiene practices compliance as decision making about risk

Daily, food workers take decisions involving sanitary risk. A brief review of good hygiene practices training studies shows that food workers knowledge about sanitary risk is often consequent after training and attitude towards good practices is overall positive. However, hygiene practices often deviate from recommendations. Reasoning under risk is known to be particularly subject to representational biases which can lead to errors in decision. A part of remaining bad practices may be due to this difficulty.
Using a theory of decision making under risk could be an alternative way to understand deviant practices and could improve existing approaches of

Good Hygiene Practices trainings. Furthermore, some recent data in the field of decision making suggests that reasoning under risk might give results of more intuitive than analytic processes. One of the theories explaining this characteristic is the Fuzzy Trace Theory.

- **3.1. General principles of the Fuzzy Trace Theory (FTT)**

The Fuzzy Trace Theory is a dual-process theory of memory, reasoning, decision making and their relationships[I]. This theory was put forwards by Charles Brainerd and Valerie Reyna in order to explain data which showed a gap between reasoning performances and memory capacities. Errors in reasoning were traditionally explained by the limitation of memory capacities. However, in certain conditions, memory and reasoning performance can be independent (Brainerd and Kingma, 1984). The Fuzzy Trace Theory considers that memory and reasoning are based on two different mental processes. Memory tasks require memorization of specific elements when reasoning is based on general meaning of situation (Reyna and Brainerd, 1995).

The theory assumes two kinds of representation in memory. One kind of representations is qualitative and contains the general meaning of situations (they are named GIST representations) the other kind is precise, quantitative and contains details of situations (they are named VERBATIM representations). Gist representations are fuzzy, general, qualitative, and contain the global meaning of the situation when the verbatim representations are precise and contain details and quantitative information. For example, if you hear the word spaniel, a verbatim trace would consist of actually remembering the word "spaniel"; a gist trace would be things that you know about spaniels (e.g., spaniels are hunting dogs, with long coats and drop ears). So, generally, verbatim memories are more specific than gist memories.

According to this theory, when we have to take a decision, multiple representations of the situation are encoded in parallel. These representations vary in their level of details and so can be placed virtually in a gist to verbatim continuum. All this representations are available in memory and all can provide a base for reasoning. Because of this, two modes of reasoning are possible: an intuitive mode and an analytic mode. Intuitive reasoning is based on the processing of general information (gist representations) when analytic reasoning is based on the processing of specific details (verbatim representations).

The Fuzzy Trace Theory assumes a general preference for intuition. In intuitive reasoning, the meaning of the situation is processed with general principles and values stored in long term memory. Because gist representations are more available and malleable, intuition is preferred. Indeed, researches based on fuzzy trace theory have shown that the use of intuition increases with age and that experts use intuitive reasoning more than novices (Reyna & Brainerd, 1994, 1995a; Reyna & Lloyd, 2006). In fact, general representations are shared by more situations than detailed representations (less specific). Experts use intuitive reasoning to attempt invariance, most situations sharing the same general meaning even if details are different.

This is the point of difference between FTT and other dual process theories: intuition is considered to be at the apex of development. Indeed, using general representations of situations presents advantages: they are more stable and more available in memory and work for a large class of situations sharing the same general meaning. Consequently, the more general representation sufficient to make a decision will be preferred for people reasoning. This preference is general and increases with the development of cognitive abilities. Studies have shown that intuition is privileged by adult compared to child and by experts compared to novices.

The Fuzzy Trace Theory has already been used to explain adolescents or professionals decisions under risk (Reyna & Ellis, 1994; Reyna and Lloyd, 2006). Furthermore, based on the theoretical assumptions, some errors in decision seem to be predictable (Reyna and Adams, 2003).

- **3.2. A possible application of the Fuzzy Trace Theory in food safety**

People are capable of both forms of thinking (intuive and analytic), but genarally prefers intuition. When they make judgments the processing of general meaning of situation prevails. This means, for example, that even if people are capable of understanding ratio concepts like probabilities and prevalence rates (which are the standard for the presentation of health-related and risk-related data), their choice

[I] *Dual-process theories considered that two different modes of processing are involved in memory and reasoning. According to these theories, the first mode is characterized by cognitive processes that are fast, automatic and unconscious when the second mode is characterized by cognitive processes that are slow, deliberative and conscious. These cognitive processes can be experimentally measured and dissociated.*

will be governed by the bottom-line meaning ("That's a high risk"; or "I am going to get cancer like my sister did"), not the precise and specific numerical information (Reyna, 2008).

Fuzzy-Trace Theory posits that advanced judgment and decision making are based on simple mental representations of choices ("fuzzy" memory traces) as opposed to more detailed, quantitative representations (verbatim memory traces).

The theory also posits that as individuals develop and acquire greater expertise in a domain, their decisions tend to be based on the meaning of the information in contrast to its verbatim details (e.g., Reyna & Lloyd, 2006).

Because decisions about good hygiene practices are decisions about sanitary risk, the Fuzzy Trace Theory can be used to predict errors in risk perception and evaluation of risk in catering. Differences between errors of experts and novices are also predictable.

- **3.3. Research perspectives**

    - ***3.3.1. Exploring biases and errors in risk evaluation***

Health Education Models all share a rational conception of decision making. They bring some useful keys to understand behavioral intentions about good hygiene practices, but practices themselves remain unaccountable. Because they assume that decision processes are based on intuition, dual process theories, like the Fuzzy Trace Theory, offer new perspectives.

We are interested in studying the role of expertise on the development of intuitive reasoning – here in the catering sector. Even if this qualitative reasoning is often the most efficient (general meaning is easy to process and is shared by multiple situations), this intuitive mode of thought is particularly subject to representational biases. The aim of this study is to know if error in risk evaluation can be explained and predicted by theory and if experts are more sensitive than novices to representational biases.

Drawing on the principles outlined by the FTT, a future study will investigate how estimation of sanitary risks by professional may be compromised by systematic biases. Using a questionnaire (modeled after Reyna and Adams, 2003), we will examine predictions of professionals' biases in risk estimation, including: knowledge deficits, retrieval failures for risk knowledge, vague, fuzzy representation of risks or processing interference. Specific and counterintuitive developmental differences are expected. If knowledge deficits might be more probable with novices, error due to retrieval failure for risk knowledge and biases in general representations could be more observed in expert evaluations, the latter relying on a more general level of representation of situations. Concerning the errors due to processing interferences, they might occur at all levels of expertise.

    - ***3.3.2 Measuring levels of representation of food workers***

The Fuzzy Trace Theory assumes that experts reasoning are based on general representation of situations. The fact is that intuitive reasoning, based on this kind of representation, is particularly subject to errors due to representational biases. A second study will aim to measure levels of details of expert representations used in professional situation involving sanitary risks. The objective is to know what kind of information (general meaning or specific details) is processed by food workers according to their level of expertise.

In order to measure levels of representation used by experts and novices in reasoning, we will devise a reasoning and memory task. In this experiment, professionals will be asked to examine series of photographs and to make a decision about risk in the depicted situation. Then, participants will have to recognize the studied photographs in a new set of pictures. This test, called recognition test, is designed in order to capture both memory based on meaning (gist-based representations) and memory based on details (verbatim-based representations) in experts and novices reasoning. Eventually, experts may take better decisions without relying on the verbatim facts of experience.

4. Conclusion

World Health Organization recommended in 1988 to use Health Education models and psychological theories for the improvement of food hygiene practices. In the past decade, Health Education models have been adapted to the field of food safety. All of these models adhere to a rational decision making framework, assuming that decision is a product of a kind of deliberation and trading off between risks and benefits (e.g. risk is a component of the knowledge system and benefits contribute to motivational system of the Health Action Model). Studies using Health Education

models suggest that knowledge, attitude and behavioral intention are insufficient to predict behaviors implementations. Psychological theory of decision under risk could explain this apparent contradiction. The Fuzzy Trace Theory is a dual-process theory of decision making assuming two modes of reasoning, named intuitive and analytic. Intuitive reasoning may be a possible cause of this "intention-behavior gap". Objectives of future researches are to investigate how intuitive reasoning influences risk representations and to describe risk evaluations of expert food workers compared to novice food workers. Next researches will then focus on intuitive decision making about sanitary risks and will identify factors, like risk representation, which can improve these decisions.

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From the table to the bed: controlling female sexuality through food in French Renaissance literature

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Abstract

During the Renaissance, to talk of food is essentially to speak of dietetics and medicine. Moreover, when texts deal with female delight, it is more a sexual delight than a greedy one. Liébault and Brantôme linked both of them and their texts are among the rare ones in French literature proposing a diet for women. In Jean Liébault's "Thresor des remedes secrets du mal des femmes" and Brantôme's discourse on "Des dames qui font l'amour et leurs maris cocus", speaking of food is also a way of speaking about female sexuality and desire. The doctor as well as the chronicler of Henri III's Court both use Galen as a model in their texts, but each have different aims: Liébault wants to cure female sexual disorders and thus food becomes a remedy for excessive sexual pleasure, while Brantôme shows how food is a way for women to kindle their libido in a delightful, pleasant way. In both texts, discourse on the female body reveals male perplexity and anxiety about a woman's pleasure of food and sex.

Keywords: Brantôme, Liébault, female sexuality, food, Renaissance.

1. Introduction

In the Renaissance, to think of pleasure is, partly, to think of fear. On the one hand, pleasure is the fear of losing one's self control and on the other hand, it is the fear of divine punishment. In this context, temperance is an essential and a moral imperative, both inherited from ancient philosophy, Christianity and the medical theory of humors spread by Hippocrates in the 5th Century BC and then developped by Galen. Four fluids or "humors", combined with essential qualities, constitute the basis of this theory: blood (hot and moist), phlegm (cold and moist), choler (hot and dry), bile or melancholy (cold and dry). Health is the balance of these qualities. As explained by Ken Albala, "The imbalance or predominance of any one humor determines the individual's "complexion", which is continually altered by the intake of foods and condiments, each of which has its own complexion." (Albala, 2002: 5). The first property of food is to be nutritious so as to maintain the individual's humoral complexion which comes from eating foods that have the same complexion.

Before being a pleasure, however, food is a remedy for the fear of disease. Michel Jeanneret explained how medicine during the Renaissance controlled food and how diets and moral food codes made way for greedy delights: "A la gourmandise, la médecine oppose le régime; aux appétits désordonnés de l'être animal, elle prescrit le contrôle rationnel de l'alimentation. La science descend à table, elle contrôle les menus et, complice des moralistes, contribue au transfert du naturel dans le culturel. Autant que l'institution de la civilité, elle travaille à domestiquer les pulsions corporelles et à les soumettre à une forme de censure sociale. " (Jeanneret, 1987: 71). Indeed, writing on food during the Renaissance is mostly set in medical discourses since dietetics was traditionally part of medicine. Thus, major works on food are dietetical treatises. Other genres such as poetry and fiction deal with the subject, in which the pleasures of food are related to the pleasures of words (Michel Jeanneret's works on Rabelais or Ronsard are very relevant in this sense) or are combined in social satire (L'Isle des Hermaphrodites, written against Henri III's reign), or as gastronomical treatises (De honesta voluptate et valetudine by Platina).

In Eating Right in the Renaissance, Ken Albala bemoans the fact that "dietary literature is geared almost entirely for a male audience, and recommendations rarely specify women's needs in particular, or if they do it is only by contrast to males" (Albala, 2002: 151). Indeed, the only recommendations for women are for pregnant women and those who are nursing. If some fictional works include scenes about women and food – Kate's diet in The Taming of the Shrew by Shakespeare is one example – it's a fact there is little interest in dietary literature or even fictional literature for a specific female diet. Yet, in French literature, two texts could compensate for this lack, especially in questioning the link between food and sexual pleasure: the "Thresor des remedes secrets pour le mal des femmes" by Jean Liébault, a doctor, and the end of the "Discours sur les dames qui font l'amour et leurs maris cocus" in "Les Dames galantes" by Brantôme, chronicler of Henri III's Court, show how food serves female sexuality. Despite Liébault's treatise and Brantôme's discourse not being dietary treatises, their texts have some similarities with this genre and are based on Galenic theory: Liébault's text is, of course, the closest as it is a medical treatise. Brantome's text uses the system of humoral physiology as the visible structure of his discourse and deals with balance, heat, coldness and appropriate foods. I would like to examine how these two texts could be a response to Ken Albala's remark about French Renaissance literature. Dealing with female diet and sexuality, and even addressing women, these texts have a particular purpose – even if they do employ different means: they underline relationships between men and women, questioning male anxieties about female pleasure, whether of sexual delight or greed.

2. Liébault and the fear of sexual delight

Jean Liébault was a doctor and also son-in-law of Charles Estienne, who wrote De Nutrimentis (1550), a dietary treatise. Liébault himself compiled one of these books, the Thesaurus sanitatis pirtitu facilis (1577) translated in French as the Thresor universel des pauvres et des riches and bases a part of his medical discourse on dietetics as a corrective to disease. Jean-Louis Flandrin showed how this treatise focused on diet and how dietetics of the Renaissance is as concerned with the seasons, constitutions and suitable food as with cooking techniques and seasonings (Margolin, 1982: 90). Thresor des remedes secrets pour le mal des femmes (1585), also known as Trois livres appartenant aux infirmitez et maladies des femmes, is a French adaptation of an Italian work by Giovanni Marinelli, inspired by Hippocrates' works on women's bodies and affections. Ken Albala noted that diets for women were mostly evoked by contrast to men;

Evelyne Berriot-Salvadore underlined that in the *Thresor*, "la femme trouve son identité dans le regard du médecin même qui ne l'examine plus comme une copie défectueuse du mâle mais comme un être entier et particulier."I (Berriot-Salvadore, 1993: 36). Moreover, women are considered by Liébault himself as potential readers of his work: "[this treatise] sera trouvé admirable, delectable & proufitable, non seulement aux femmes, mais aussi à toutes personnes de bon et sain jugement" (Liébault, 1585: f.iiii). Speaking about and to women, Liébault adapts medical and dietetical traditions to their particular diseases.

- **2.1. Food as a curative aim**

In Book I, following dietetics in the Renaissance, Liébault considers food as a corrective to dysfunctions in female sexuality: adapted food is a solution to the absence of menstruation or to the excess or retention of seed which is called "greensickness". Indeed, during the Renaissance and according to Galen's theories, women as well men are thought to produce seed for conception. In the Middle Ages, as medical theories were mostly influenced by both Galen and Aristotle, who did not identify female seed, "the role of pleasure in conception was more controversial with respect to women than with respect to men" as remarked by Joan Cadden (1995: 142). During the Renaissance, Galen's theory of male and female seed was a popular belief and sexual pleasure was linked to it. Jean Liébault himself showed how female seed ejaculation was connected to pleasure and how this pleasure was even more intense than the male one: "Si donc outre le plaisir que la femme prend à rendre sa semence nous considerons, la nature, les forces, facultez, fonctions et mouvement merveilleux au corps de la matrice de la femme [...] nous jugerons facilement et necessairement que la femme reçoit plus de plaisir et plus de contentement en ce combat naturel que l'homme." (Liébault, 1585: 529). As explained by Laurent Joubert in his *Erreurs populaires* (1572), female and male seed is the result of the nutritive processus: "(...) rien fait beaucoup de semence, que l'aliment fort nourrissant, & qui devient sang fort loüable." (Joubert, 1601: 96). The excess of nutritive material is used by the body to create seed and, in the case of women, menstrual blood, which is what remains after the changing of nutritive substances into seed. Moreover, following Galenic tradition, it was believed that sexual pleasure was linked to seed and was needed for procreation. In this way, body heat was essential because it could activate blood and seed circulation. According to the humoral theory, hot and moist food, being very nutritive, helped to keep the heat and so provoke sexual appetite. In this way, absence of menstruation or greensickness (when there is no outlet for the seed) could lead to an excess of heat and an appropriate diet was proposed to cool the body, and especially to try to keep women away from an excess of sexual desire.

In Book I, chapters XXII and XXVII of "Thresor des remedes secrets pour le mal des femmes", Liébault uses food to cure female disorders, in particular those concerning sexuality. Two disorders have a common bond in food, fear and sexual delight: an unmarried girl's seed retention and newlyweds' physical decline (for men as well as women).

"Pour prevoir aux symptomes qui peuvent agiter les filles pour la retention de l'humeur spermatique, faut temperer l'ardeur et titillation d'iceluy." (Liébault, 1585: 44)

"Si donc les nouveaux mariez se sont laissez tellement transporter par un ardent et furieux desir de l'œuvre charnelle, qu'ils en soient demeurez par trop debiles, ou ayent perdu la mémoire, ou la veuë, ou tombez en autres tels accidens qu'avons cy devant d'escrit, on y pourra donner tel remede." (Liébault, 1585: 62)

In the first case, the excess of female seed, unable to be expelled because of the absence of sexual intercourse, creates the threat of another excess, that of sensual delight and desire. A suitable diet must be followed to remedy female heat (*ardeur*): foods that cool the body are needed. In the second case, the excess is meant by the consecutive structure "tellement...que" which sets two extreme states, the heat and the weakness. The diet has to make the body return to a moderate state and the newlyweds have to eat foods that could reheat their bodies. For the male as for the

I Galen's theory explains that "toutes les parties génératives qui sont en l'homme se trouvent aussi en la femme" (French translation by Jacques Dalechamps, 1566, quoted by Evelyne Berriot-Salvadore, 1993, 17). In Renaissance, this belief is still very strong and women are considered like uncompleted men. Yet Evelyne Berriot-Salvadore notes a change in the end of 16th Century: "Ceux qui dénoncent, en effet, les erreurs et les préjugés qui font de la femme une créature inférieure, s'appuient bien souvent sur une autre description de l'anatomie féminine et appellent de leurs voeux une méthode d'observation plus rigoureuse. C'est le cas, particulièrement, d'André Du Laurens qui ne craint pas d'affirmer contre l'opinion des Anciens et contre celle de la majorité encore de ses confrères que les parties génitales de la femme sont différentes de celles de l'homme, et dans leur nombre, et dans leur forme et dans leur composition" (1993, 36).

female, excessive sexual pleasure leads to physical decline, requiring suitable food for restoration.

These two cases oppose on several points. On the one hand, Liébault presents a situation of celibacy in which sexual delight is clearly a danger to avoid. Food is a way to prevent girls' heat and desire from increasing and is even a way to try to decrease it. Another solution is marriage, which avoids the retention of seed due to it being released during the sexual act, permitted only in marriage; this solution is not without danger, as pointed out in the second case. Indeed, this case concerns itself with a disorder within the conjugal relationship not owing to an absence of sexual intercourse, as previously, but rather to the excessive frequency of intercourse. In both cases, excessive pleasure is a threat to physiological and moral balance.

- **2.2. Diet and food habits**

To prevent or cure excessive female sexual delight – in young girls or young brides - Liébault proposes two diets adapted to each of their affections. For a girl's greensickness, the diet comes along with lifestyle recommendations: no games or entertainment leading to excitement, no balls, no company of men, but rather peaceful activities to occupy the spirit so as not to become idle or even haunted by lascivious thoughts; nothing that could heat the body too much. Food must keep the body calm and quiet:

"Quant au regime de vie, qui tient icy les principales parties, les jeusnes et abstinence leur sont fort profitables, (d'autant que comme dit le commun proverbe) *Istud daemonii genus non eiicitur, nisi oratione et ieiunio*II), pour reprimer et refrener l'ardeur de leur jeunesse. Leur viande sera facile à digerer, legiere et rafreschissante, non aromatique, espicee, venteuse, exquise, delicate et chaude. Le boire, eau pure et claire, non de vin, d'autant que le commun proverbe dit, que sans vin et viande luxure se refroidit : àraison dequoy Platon en sa republique defend totalement l'usage de vin aux jeunes gens, et principalement aux femmes, et le permet seulement aux vieils." (Liébault, 1585: 45)

Liébault gives some indications of food which can be eaten, without being very precise about the dishes themselves, but being clear about their essential qualities. The first part of the enumeration underlines the good qualities of the diet, the second part, the bad ones. The bad qualities could heat the body because they are too nutritious. The first ones avoided excessive heat in the body. As these foods, merely meat and drinks, are a cure, they break up with food habits which have to be nutritious to maintain a healthy body. Liébault insists on two ideas: facilitated digestion and the body's refreshment for calming sensual heat. Accordingly, all seasoning is prohibited, meat with cold qualities to balance the body temperature must be eaten and no wine may be drunk, only water. Indeed, wine, as a very nutritive drink, must be prohibited because it could heat the blood. In his recommendations, the doctor is particularly respectful of dietetical tradition, whether it is a popular (the quotation of a Latin proverb and the mention of another one about meat and wine) or a philosophic (Plato) tradition. However, quoting Plato here is false because there is no mention of such rules in "The Republic". Indeed, thoughts on wine can be found in "Timaeus" and especially in the "Laws", where the idea is developed that wine is not suited to young people but is beneficial to old men. Contrary to what Liébault suggests in using the adverb *principalement*, Plato does not specifically evoke women. The doctor adapts Plato's comments to his own discourse and aims to stress the ancient belief he wishes to bring to his thoughts. This change in Plato's idea underlines the fact that Liébault's aim is women's health, whether women are the readers or only patients.

Ken Albala noted that most of the dietetical treatises from the 1540s banned foods that could be associated with peasantsIII, but also went against Court habits. Talking about *De Nutrimentis* by Charles Estienne, Albala explains that this treatise "also excised many foods completely in consideration of health: onions, leeks, and garlic because they were appropriate for barbers and journeymen, foods such as cakes, truffles, and exotic new fruits because they were associated with gluttony." In this way, writing on food and diet also deals with social class clichés and as the purpose of these treatises is the balance of the body, the people they intend to reach are also socially balanced people, not among the poorest nor of the Court. As Albala also stresses, at the same time there appears the ideal image of healthy and simple peasants. Liébault's discourse on the newlywed disorder seems to be a part of this paradoxical statement. In chapter XXII, Liébault sets apart, in a significant way, girls from

II I translate: " This kind of evil can be cured only by prayer or fasting. ''

III Liébault's collection, *Thesaurus sanitatis paratu facilis* (1557) and translated in French as *Recueil des remèdes faciles*, written for poor people (even if they cannot read Latin...), is an exception.

the city - and of those of the Court - from those of the country who are active and occupied by work. The second case relating to the newlywed disorder only partially underlines this report:

" Pour ceste occasion faut user de viandes dellicates, de bon suc, et faciles à digerer, qui soyent humides et chaudes quelque peu, quelles sont bouillons de poulets, perdrix, pigeonneaux, colombe, chaponneaux, desquels on fera panades, ou consommez, ou bouillons avec jaunes d'œufs, et peu de safran ou poudre de muguette ou d'autres espices odoriferantes qui ne soyent beaucoup chaudes : faut manger peu et user de viandes qui nourrissent beaucoup en petite quantité, le laict d'anesse, ou de chevre, ou de brebis, ou de vache, a une grande vertu pour conforter et restaurer les esprits perdus, moyennant qu'on en prenne au matin en telle quantité qu'il ne se puisse digerer, puis dormir quelque peu dessus : le pain blanc trempé en vin genereux est un soudain et present remede pour telle debilité : Les laicts d'amendes avec semences de melons. Pour le boire, le vin blanc doux bien odorant est le meilleur [...]. " (Liébault, 1585: 63)

Liébault is more precise about the kinds of food, but the idea of facilitated digestion, as well as meat and drink being the base of the diet, echo the previous prescription. Meat must be lean poultry, which can be slightly flavored and spiced, in contrast to what was recommended for the retention of seed; wine is allowed, but only white wine, being lighter than red. What is important in this case is restoring life in a body exhausted by sensual delight. The moderate custom of spices and wine enable giving it strength and vigor, without falling into the excessive inverse. This diet is very close to what Laurent Joubert recommends for increasing desire: "(...) un bon chappon, & autres chairs delicates, le jeune mouton, le veau, le pigeonneau, les oeufs mollets, les pigeons frais, bon pain, bon vin, & semblables en mediocre quantité." (Joubert, 1601: 96). The cure diet in Liébault's text is an aphrodisiacal diet in Joubert's, but the purpose of both is to reheat the body through nutritious food.

The unmarried young girl's heated body, threatened by desire and lasciviousness, gives way to the young bride's body, exhausted by lovemaking. The context of sensual delight is thus very different: the former underlines the danger of an out-of-wedlock relationship, while the latter brings to light a legitimate frame for pleasure – the conjugal relationship. The first diet prevents moral danger, while the second one looks after a danger which is only physical. The recipes of the *Thresor* must not "prophanez ou divulguez au populaire" (Liébault, 1585: f.iiii) and yet food habits of the Court are not used in a nourishing diet to cure the newlyweds' weakness. Liébault seems to prefer choosing foods which are much closer to popular or country food habits. In the Middle Ages, products from the earth were despised by the social elite. Michel Jeanneret noted a change during the Renaissance: "The trend is clear: the social and economic elite of the Renaissance no longer consider vegetables as undignified, but see in them a sign of distinction and a delicacy." (Jeanneret, 2007: 212) No fruits or vegetables are part of this diet, perhaps because they are not nourishing enough to restore the newlyweds. Liébault suggests bread and dairy products, which are associated with an ideal representation of country life. Indeed, diets for the poorest people, as suggested by the *Recueil des remèdes faciles* compiled by Liébault, are based on herbs, giblets and offal. In the same way as country girls were not subject to lasciviousness because they were not idle, could these country foods, bread and dairy products, be interpreted as a way to be more virtuous for those Court and city people devoted to excessive sensual delight? Would Liébault believe in an innocent and healthy rural environment or does it mean that this theory was aimed at people from the country as well as people from the city or the Court?

Giving these questions clear, definitive answers is difficult, but taking Liébault's discourse into consideration with Brantôme's text draws attention to the different aims and moral codes related to the same subject and yet still underlines some masculine anxiety about female desire and delights.

3. Brantôme: obvious pleasure, underlying fear?

▪ 3.1. An ambiguous aim, between advice and reports

Brantôme's purpose, in "Discours sur les dames qui font l'amour et leurs maris cocus" is the opposite of Liébault's: he gives some recipes to keep or to make even hotter the heat of a woman's body, in order to keep up female libido. Contrary to Liébault, his point of departure is not a medical physical trouble, but an erotic one: he questions the season in which there is more adultery. Even if Brantôme first examines food and seasons as correctives of humors – just as in Hippocrates' and Galen's works, the real balance here is a sexual one, and food creates both the female fear of loss of desire and the male fear of being cuckolded. The context is both satirical and facetious. Describing

the ladies of the Court's aphrodisiacal habits, he stresses the excesses of an immoral Court, but also enjoys writing of these female pleasures. In a way, Brantôme, like Liébault, also writes some “Secrets of Women”. In addition to Galen, one of his models could be De *Secretibus Mulierum* by Albertus Magnus, which, as Thomas Laqueur explains, is “compiled from ancient lore during the later Middle Ages and still popular in the 18th Century, speaks of the appetite for intercourse as a direct result of the buildup of residue from daily food.” (Laqueur, 1990: 43). Inspired by Galen's theories, this book is full of popular beliefs, exactly what Brantôme's recipes and anecdotes are.

In “Les Dames galantes”, sex and food are closely linked. According to Michèle Clément, they are “comme des objets de besoin, nécessaires à la vie et à la propagation de l'espèce” as well as “relevant du désir et s'inscrivant dans la sphère des plaisirs” (Clément, 1997: 134-5). This double dynamic, both vital and sensual, is essential in the way Brantôme deals with a woman's delight in food as the point of departure in the cycle of the seasons.

Diverting roguishly Hippocrates' comments on the humors theory, the seasons and the adapted diet, Brantôme ends his discourse on “dames qui font l'amour et leurs maris cocus” with the questions: “en quelle saison de l'année se fait plus de cocus, et laquelle est plus propre à l'amour, et à esbransler une femme, une veufve ou une fille ?” (Brantôme, 1991: 377). According to the logic of Hippocrates' theory, in which disorders caused by the seasons were treated by a suitable diet, the place given to food in Brantôme's answer depends on the various seasons. At first, Brantôme attempts to give a precise answer to his question:

“ Certainement la plus commune voix est qu'il n'y a pour cela que le printemps, qui esveille les corps et les esprits endormis de l'hyver fascheux et mélancholiq; et puisque tous les oyseaux et animaux s'en resjouissent et entrent tous en amours, les personnes qui ont autre sens et sentiment s'en ressentent bien davantage, et surtout les femmes (selon l'opinion de plusieurs philosophes et médecins), qui entrent lors en plus grande ardeur et amour qu'en tout autre temps, ainsi que je l'ay ouy dire à aucunes honnestes et belles dames […]. ” (Brantôme, 1991: 377)

Three opinions come to a consensus: the common opinion, that of the scholars (philosophers and doctors) and of Brantôme himself agree in saying that spring is the perfect season for love. The common opinion relates human behavior to that of animals, the scholars pointing out that sensual awakening affects women more particularly and Brantôme confirms it by some gossip he had heard. The system of opinions is further reduced, giving rise to the principle guiding Brantôme's thoughts and writing, that is to say, his anecdotes. This limitation does not announce a scientific discourse, but rather worldly observations. Brantôme's aim is not to speak of food, dietetics and medicine, but to show how food can be used in a controversial, immoral way. He is not interested in health, but in all the stories concerning the ladies of the Court and wants to arouse his reader's curiosity. As Brantôme's discourse continues, his words become ever more daring, the circumlocution “ esveille les corps et les esprits endormis de l'hyver fascheux et mélancoliq ” being replaced, for example, by the more laconic and direct adjective, “ lascif ”. Even if he supports spring as a sensual season with light clothes revealing female lechery, Brantôme considers all the seasons. Indeed, the first allusion to food is in connection with summer heat:

“ Le printemps passé fait place à l'esté, qui vient après et porte avec soy ses chaleurs : et ainsi qu'une chaleur amène l'autre, la dame par conséquent double la sienne ; et nul rafraischissement ne la luy peut oster si bien qu'un bain chaud et trouble de sperme vénériq. […] ‘d'autant, disoit un jour une grande, que le c.. est bien confit, à cause du doux chaud et feu de la nuict, qui l'a ainsi cuit et confit, et qu'il en est beaucoup meilleur et savoureux’. ” (Brantôme, 1991: 378)

We find here that Michèle Clément has analyzed both the vital and sensual dynamics of food. Ejaculation is a necessary bath which can balance the body (life), and the vagina is compared to a tasty, delightful dish (delight). Thus, the first occurrence of food is not about moderation, but about sexual pleasure: Brantôme sets his discourse to come in a mischievous tone with erotic context.

Summertime marks a change of perspective, as in the initial response to the first question: “ Les femmes ne courent jamais cette fortune, car tous mois, toutes saisons, tous temps, tous signes leur sont bons. ” (Brantôme, 1991: 379) For women, all seasons are convenient for love. This report should put an end to the discourse, as it answers the initial question. Yet, it is a way to review the aphrodisiac resources of each season and especially to present, in the style of Hippocrates, the appropriate food. Thus, the discourse takes a new direction and does not try to

find the best season for lust anymore, but what kind of food and dishes, according to the seasons, are the most convenient for maintaining the female libido:

" Or les bons fruits de l'été surviennent, qui semblent devoir rafraischir ces honnestes et chaleureuses dames. A aucunes j'en ay veu manger peu, et à d'autres prou. Mais pourtant on n'y a guières veu de changement de leur chaleur, ny aux unes ny aux autres, pour s'en abstenir ny pour en manger ; car le pis est que, s'il y a aucuns fruits qui puissent rafraischir, il y en a bien force autres qui reschauffent bien autant, auxquels les dames courent le plus souvent. " (Brantôme, 1991: 378)

Contrary to Liébault's perspective, dishes cannot calm female heat. Female behavior shows that, far from wanting to calm their sensual desires, they rather wish to exploit them. Food is both a substitute and a preliminary to sexual intercourse. The dietetical references appear just as another example of female lust. In the *Tiers Livre*, Rabelais, through Rondibilis' medical discourse to Panurge, used Plato's image of the womb as a voracious animal to justify female adultery and lasciviousness; here, Brantôme uses food as a medical argument to prove women's sexual appetite.

In this way, Brantôme's intention is not to propose a real diet, which would have the same medical aim as Liébault's. Within the company of the Court, he rather establishes the habits of pleasure of which he wishes to pass all the facetious flavor on to the reader. In breaking the dynamics of the aphrodisiac dishes at the end of his discourse, Brantôme plays with his reader and shows that his aim is to reveal different views of female pleasure, using food as more than an excuse:

" Or, pour faire fin, je dis et affirme : que toutes saisons sont propres pour l'amour, quand elles sont prises à propos, et selon les caprices des hommes et des femmes qui les surprennent […] non plus ne servent guières leurs simples, ny leurs fruits, ny leurs drogues, ny drogueurs, ny quelque artifice que facent ny les unes ny les autres, soit pour augmenter leur chaleur, soit pour la rafraischir. Car, pour le dernier exemple, je connois une grand' dame à qui sa mère, dez son petit aage, la voyant d'un sang chaud et bouillant qui la menoit un jour tout droit au chemin du bourdeau, luy fit user par l'espace de trente ans, ordinairement en tous ses repas, du jus de vinette, qu'on appelle en France ozeille, fust en ses viandes, fust en ses potages et avec bouillons, fust pour en boire de grandes escuelles à oreilles sans autres choses entremeslées; bref, toutes ses sausses estoient jus de vinette. Elle eut beau faire tous ces mystères réfrigératifs, qu'enfin ç'a esté une illustrissime et grandissime putain, et qui n'avoit point besoin de ces pastez que j'ay dit pour luy donner de la chaleur, car elle en a assez; et si pourtant elle est aussi goulue à les manger que toute autre. " (Brantôme, 1991: 384)

All the previous comments on the various dishes seem to be canceled out here. For Brantôme, no food is more of an aphrodisiac than any other. However, the anecdote on the ineffective effects of food, which underlines the subjective depreciation of a diet adapted to the female libido, opposes Brantôme's discourse: this anecdote does not deal with a dish increasing desire, as all the other examples, but with foods decreasing libido. The reader is brought to the conclusion that women are lascivious, whatever they do, and not that there are some ineffective foods. Trying to rationalize female sexual desire by the seasons and food, proceeds at the same time of a will to write on a light, facetious subject and also of a fear, or at least a perplexity, of the male puzzled by a woman's sensual delight.

- **3.2. Reporting pleasures of the Court**

Ken Albala underlined that "nearly all aphrodisiac foods were also associated with the Court by Period 2 and 3 authorsIV. Not only expensive foods but also exquisite types of food were identified as well: aspargus, artichokes, and most frequently melons and peaches." (Albala, 2002: 206) Brantôme uses precisely this cliché and focuses the diet of the ladies of the Court and his anecdotes on it. Indeed, he offers a place of choice to culinary novelties and, by a false dietetics of palate and delights of the flesh, tries to report the gastronomic fashion of his time. Repeatedly, he equates the pleasure of food with the pleasure of novelty:

" Ce n'est pas tout; car il faut avec ces fruits nouveaux, et fruits des jardins et des champs, y adjouster de bons grands pastez, que l'on a inventez depuis quelque temps, avec force pistaches, pignons et autres drogues d'apoticaires scaldatives […].

[…] car le pis est que, s'il y a aucuns fruits qui puissent rafraischir, il y en a bien force autres qui reschauffent bien autant, auxquels les dames

IV To Ken Albala, Period 2 is from 1530 to 1570s and stands for the Galenic revival, and Period 3 is from 1570s to 1650 and is marked by the breakdown of Galenic tradition.

courent le plus souvent, comme à plusieurs simples qui sont en leur vertu et bons et plaisants à manger en leurs potages et salades, et comme aux asperges, aux artichaux, aux morilles, aux trufles, aux mousserons et potirons, et aux viandes nouvelles que leurs cuisiniers, par leurs ordonnances, sçavent très-bien accoustrer et accommoder à la friandise et lubricité, et que les médecins aussi leur sçavent bien ordonner. " (Brantôme, 1991: 380)

The range of aphrodisiac food is rather wide and includes food of several categories: fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, meat. Brantôme repeatedly emphasizes the novelty of these dishes by the adjective " inventez " and when he does not, he proposes food recently arrived on French tables, and in particular those of the Court, such as artichokes, asparagus or pistachio nuts. The novelty is double in that it can involve at the same time food recently discovered and new recipes. For these, cooks play an important part in this diet. Indeed, the woman is at the heart of a gastronomic chain, of which she is also the instigator: her desire pushes her towards the doctor who prescribes an adequate diet, then she turns to her cook who knows how to accommodate the prescribed food, to take finally a double pleasure, that of tasting the food and of sexual delight, multiplied tenfold by the recipe. Liébault passed on medical knowledge, Brantôme passes on a three-fold erotic knowledge of food: pleasure of good health, pleasure of greed and sexual pleasure. Thanks to this knowledge which they inherit from their cooks - the possessive in Brantôme's words ("*leurs* cuisiniers") is important here, because it underlines the confidential relationship established between the woman and her cook - women become more educated in erotic games because of related recipes.

Brantôme's reference to truffles is a sign of a double perspective on fashionable foods: novelty and popularity. Laurent Joubert in his *Erreurs populaires* wrote a chapter about the aphrodisiacal power of truffles, which underlines how its aphrodisiacal qualities were a strong popular belief. He explains that truffles are cold and moist, qualities that cannot produce seed. Yet, he adds that "ce ne sont que ventositez & grosses vapeurs (…). Ce que peut bien rendre les personnes salaces, mais non pas foecondes ni pres de là." (Joubert, 1601: 98-9). Joubert's treatise, dedicated to Marguerite of Valois, seems to succeed in revealing popular mistakes. Indeed, in the dedication to Marguerite, he says he chose her as a judge to clarify popular beliefs because he, as a doctor, failed to do so. Thus, we can assume that the *Erreurs* was written primarily for the people of the Court and that Brantôme's reference to truffles as aphrodisiacs is a sign of that. The chronicler does not use truffles in the false perspective denounced by Joubert: the ladies in his texts do not want to be more fertile, just more "salace". Yet, the windy qualities of truffles, "that diffuse throughout the body, inflating the blood vessels in the extremities" (Albala, 2002: 148), are good especially for men because they need to be aroused. The particular influence on women's sexual desire is not considered and it is thought to be increased just like men's desire. Even when talking about women, the dietetical codes are the ones for men.

- **3.3. Image of the devouring woman: between fear and pleasure**

By insisting on the creative and innovative aspect of aphrodisiac cooking, Brantôme presents gastronomy not only as a fashion, but also as a new means for ladies to maintain their libido. Erotic pleasure and the pleasure of the latest trends in cooking blend and tend to present women in the grips of a wild quest for refined pleasures. This evocation of an eager, desirous woman concentrates all the ambiguities of Brantôme's discourse, which oscillates between amusing comments and anxiety. Indeed, the erotic-gastronomic knowledge of women is not without danger for men: "Au partir de ces bons mangers, donnez-vous garde, pauvres amants et marys. Que si vous n'estes bien préparez, vous voilà déshonnorez, et bien souvent on vous quitte pour aller au change." (Brantôme, 1991: 379-380) Without having to cite some philosophic source, contrary to Liébault's text, Brantôme's discourse evokes Plato's thoughts in Timeas, which presents the womb as an eager animal whose dissatisfaction urges the woman to roam until she fulfils its desire and feeds it. This description of the matrix is the origin of misogynous conceptions of female lasciviousness, still present in the 16th Century. By associating wild sexual desire and greed, Brantôme makes a woman's belly - womb and stomach - a double object of anxiety; it is also even a way of dealing with the female pleasure of food.

The narrative of the cock testicles tasting is symbolic of this ambivalent figure of the greedy woman:

" Et de ces pastez ainsi composez de menusailles de ces petits cocqs et culs d'artichaux et trufles, ou autres friandises chaudes, en usent souvent quelques dames que j'ay ouy dire; lesquelles, quand elles en mangent et y peschent, mettant la main dedans ou avec les fourchettes, et en rapportant et remettant en la bouche ou

l'artichault, ou la trufle ou la pistache, ou la creste de cocq, ou autre morceau, elles disent avec une tristesse morne: *blanque*; et quand elles rencontrent les gentils couillons de cocq, et les mettent sous la dent, elles disent d'une allégrese: *benefice*; ainsi qu'on fait à la blanque en Italie, et comme si elles avoyent rentré et gaigné quelque joyau très-précieux et riche. " (Brantôme, 1991: 380)

The cock testicles are one of the aphrodisiac dishes appreciated by the ladies of the Court and their tasting is described here as a form of gambling. The word *blanque*, used in this period in some card games, means bad pickaxe. In this anecdote, the ladies do not eat to feed themselves but only for simple playful greed. Food appears as an entertainment, the diet as a pleasure, not as a constraint, and the flavor of cock testicles is doubled by the pleasure of winning in making a good pickaxe. Just before this excerpt, Brantôme states that the testicles of "chauds, ardants, et gaillards" cocks are better. By preferring to eat the genitals of an animal which distinguishes itself for its sexual power, the ladies do not eat those in a playful way only: they also incorporate the sexual heat of the animal in order to strengthen their own. The explicitly sexual nature of the dishes transforms this scene of tasting to a scene of castration. The parallel between the castrated cocks and men is then imperative and comes true in the text repeatedly. Moreover, just like truffles, cock testicles were suitable to increase male virility as noted by Liébaut in the *Recueil des Remèdes faciles* (Liébault, 1651: 288). Once again, the female diet is a copy of the male one, but it also may be a sign of unnatural women, who, in searching for sexual pleasure, act like men.

Indeed, if Brantôme approves this search for lustful balance because it benefits first of all the lovers, he warns them repeatedly on the requirements of their mistresses. Yet, these do not hesitate to share their recipes so that their lovers can benefit from them. Sharing the bed is then subjected to sharing the table, so that each can be satisfied. However, it is not always enough and an anecdote about a lady who shared her recipes with her lover reports one of these failures: " Sur quoy elle luy dit, ou que son cuisinier l'avoit mal servy, ou y avoit espargné des drogues et compositions qu'il y falloit, ou qu'il n'avoit pas pris tous ses préparatifs pour la grand' médecine, ou que son corps pour lors estoit mal disposé pour la prendre et la rendre : et ainsi elle se moqua de luy. " (Brantôme, 1991: 382) As her lover cannot satisfy her as she wishes, the lady's reaction is marked twice in the phrasal period: the protasis is made up of a series of hypotheses on the lack of vigor of the lover and the apodosis, more concisely, refers to the lover being pushed away the lady's derisive laughter. The man is faulted by the lady and emasculated twice: the first time by the sexual hunger of his partner who urges him to share her recipes, the second time by her mockery. Food crystallizes the stakes in power between the sexes, knocking down the traditional social hierarchy where the man dominates. This anguish is particularly significant in several texts written by men in the Renaissance, and especially educational treatises for women, as Jean Vivès' *De Institutione Feminae Christianae*, first published in 1523 and translated in French by Pierre de Changy in 1542 as *L'Institution de la femme chrétienne*. In this essay, Vivès shows how women, from the young virgin to the widow, have to be submissive to men. In the book about the virgins, a diet is given in which, referring to Saint Paul, all the most nutritious foods are forbidden to them: "Dit outre qu'en la force du vin gist luxure & est bon non en boire, ne manger chair que peu souvent, mais seulement des potages. (…) Ainsi l'adolescente retiree de viandes ferventes est seure de chasteté." (Vivès, 1891: 54). The purpose is not a dietetical one but a moral one as the references come mostly from the Christian tradition. Food is a way for men to keep women under control, in preserving them from lust.

Food is a delight only in Brantôme's text. In Liébault's theory, food is a remedy to another kind of delight, sexual pleasure. In this way, dishes proposed by the doctor do not have to be tasty but only curative. Fear does not come from food but from female sexual desire and pleasure and food is a way to control the female body and sexuality. Brantôme's perspective is not as moral as Liébault's. As he rewrites medical tradition, food is also first presented as a remedy, but as it serves sexual pleasure, it's a delight as well. In these two different perspectives, Renaissance eating habits are portrayed in different ways: useful dietetic dishes for Liébault, fashionable fun dishes for Brantôme. For the doctor, woman is a source of moral weakness, whereas for the chronicler, she is sexually powerful. Yet in both texts she appears as a figure of anxiety in male eyes and food is both a way to control her or to reveal her lustful inclinations.

In French Renaissance literature, female greed is not really explored. When texts deal with female delight, it is more a sexual delight than a greedy one. Liébault and Brantôme linked both of them and their texts are among the rare ones in French literature proposing a diet for women. In a different genre, Michel de Nostre Dame, well

known as Nostradamus, wrote a treatise about cosmetics and sweets called “Excellent et tresutil opuscule”. Nostradamus said he wrote this very popular book of recipes in order to satisfy “ le sexe féminin, qui continuellement est cupide de sçavoir & entendre chose de nouvelleté, & tenir leur cabinet pourveu de plusieurs sortes de confitures ” (Nostradamus, 1572, 114). Even if Nostradamus' treatise is not a medical one as Liébault's or does not use the Galenic basis as Brantome's, these sweets, as noted by Jean-Louis Flandrin, were “used for therapeutic purposes” (Flandrin, 2000, 366). Yet Nostradamus gives some of his recipes only for greed. Moreover, his aim for women is to satisfy their curiosity for novelties and their desire of learning, as in Brantôme's text. So, for women, delight in food is not only a sensual delight, it is also an intellectual delight, and greed can have its own science. There is a change in the way of considering female pleasure: Evelyne Berriot-Salvadore showed how Liébault gave an individual identity to woman in studying her diseases without considering her only as a copy of man, but what we have with Nostradamus is totally different: woman is still considered individually but as a potential client and not as a patient. In a very modern perspective, Nostradamus uses women's delights, and especially food delight, as arguments for his recipes and products.

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Is hippophagy a taboo in constant evolution?

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Abstract

Food choice is strongly determined by religious and cultural elements specific to each civilization. Numerous food prescriptions concern meat, beginning with the total or partial ban on meat. Among the numerous animal species concerned by religious or cultural prohibitions, horse meat occupies an original place because the ban on its consumption varies a lot according to places and times. Widely consumed in Eurasia in the Prehistory, horse meat is still eaten by many in the big steppes of Central Asia while hippophagy has declined in Western Europe, for reasons which seem more connected to a new social status having more to do with medieval nobiliary values than religious prohibitions. Some non-horse-eating countries such as Japan from the end of the 19th Century became hippophagic for the sake of western modernity or after the introduction of horse by the Europeans as in Chile or Argentina. On the contrary, countries with English and Germanic culture, formerly hippophagic, gave up the consumption of horse meat massively in the 20th Century, except in times of food shortage (World War II in particular). The study of the French case shows the importance of the veterinary and positivist propaganda in the legalization of hippophagy in 1866, in the context of the industrial revolution and strong meat need for the emerging working class. The decline in labour values and the deindustrialization since the 1970s have come along rather logically with a steep decline in hippophagy.

Keywords: Horse, Meat, Hippophagy, Food taboo, Neophobia.

1. Introduction

In 1992, anthropologist François Poplin wrote an article that was provocatively entitled "Horse, the shameful meat", in which he mentioned that in France horse meat was available as minced meat so that it could not be identified in order to be appropriate : "You can't see any bones or skin, it will not reveal its identity" (Poplin, 1992: 30). Humans will only consume horse meat after transforming it completely so as to forget the animal. According to François Poplin, "these bends, these dodgings, and the dissimulation behind the beef, don't allow horse meat to have a real status in meat culture" (Poplin, 1992: 31). Horse meat clearly seems to have a different status compared to other types of meat that are consumed by human beings. Speaking about a fear of horsemeat might be excessive because fear is a survival mecanism to something specific such as pain or danger. Nevertheless, there is a phobia, an absolute disgust for some food in many cultures.
Has there always been a horse taboo? Is it present in all cultures? Firstly, the issue of hippophagy shall be investigated by comparing historical and geographical elements and secondly. We would like to show that the phobia of horsemeat, which can be extremely violent when linked to a feeling of unacceptable stain, is first and foremost determined by social and cultural reasons. That's why we offer a non-exhaustive study of the status of horsemeat in different places at different periods of time. Finally, we will focus on the French situation in the 19th and 20th centuries and see that a food taboo can change not only in the long term but also in the short run. As France is to be found between countries of Mediterranean tradition and Anglo-Saxon countries, it is interesting to its situation. Indeed, the evolution of hippophagy there has been very different from that of its European neighbors. Studying the French situation might enable us to understand why some regions deeply marked by industrialization in the 19th century (England on the one hand, Belgium and Northern France on the other hand) have adopted poles apart behaviors as far as horsemeat is concerned.

2. Horse meat consumption around the world

Hippophagy is not the same all around the world. Moreover areas where horse meat is produced are not necessarily those where the meat is consumed.

Country	Production in 2004 (metric tons)	Consumption in 2004 (metric tons)[I]
China	420 000	420 300
Mexico	78 880	83 200
Italy	45 000	65 950
Kazakhstan	56 300	56 210
France	6 860	25 380
Argentina	55 600	22 190
Mongolia	40 000	21 160
Australia	21 280	19 180
Kyrgyzstan	18 000	18 920
Brazil	21 200	680

Let's start with the countries where horsemeat is not only accepted but also appreciated. Russia (especially Iakoutia), Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Mongolia, China and Japan are regular horse meat-eating countries. Anthropologist Carole Ferret mentions that "in the very centre of Asia, turkish-speaking people, who were considered famous riders, see horse meat as the most prestigious meat — whether they be Muslims or not" (Ferret, 2010). There is no hippophagic taboo in Iakoutia: "Iakoute horses are widely used because of their strength for work but first of all they have become animals designed for meat consumption".

Japanese people eat more than 5500 tons of horse meat (called basashi) every year. Raw horse meat is a traditional dish in the Nagano area: it is called sakura-niku because the red colour of the horse meat reminds one of cherry blossoms (called sakura). This behaviour started during the Meiji Era, at the end of the 19th Century, under the influence of the Western culture (Cobbi, 1989: 41).

On the contrary, many other cultures consider horsemeat an abomination, very often on religious grounds. There is a persistent rejection of horsemeat amongst gypsies. As for Israel the

[I] http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hippophagie (accessed June 3rd, 2011).

reason is religious and divine: horsemeat being forbidden by Jewish law because the horse is not a ruminant, nor does it have cloven hooves. In Islamic law, horses are generally considered *makruh*, i.e. the meat is not *haram* (forbidden) but eating it is strongly discouraged. In Sunni Islam, Al-Bukhari reports that Muhammad forbade the eating of a donkey, but the general applicability of this *hadith* is unclear. Buddhism and Hinduism prohibit hippophagy (Farb and Armelagos, 1985: 194).

Horse eating is still taboo in English-speaking countries like the UK, Ireland, the USA, Australia or Canada but also in Africa, India, etc… In the United States, selling and consuming horse meat is illegal in California and Illinois while horse slaughtering is legal if it is to make animal food. However, horse meat was sold in the United States during World War II, since beef was expensive, rationed and destined for the troops. In Canada, horsemeat is legal, but the only market — which is not very broad — is the French-speaking province of Quebec, where the taboo is not so strong, and a few (mostly French) restaurants in Canada. Canada exports some 14 500 tons of horsemeat every year, mainly to France and Japan.

In Europe there is a discrepancy between Latin countries, where people are more or less hippophagic, and Anglo-Saxon countries (Great-Britain and Ireland) where people dislike horsemeat. All the Anglo-Saxon countries export horse meat to foreign markets. In the United Kingdom, this strong taboo includes banning horsemeat from commercial pet food and DNA testing of some types of salami suspected of containing donkey meat.

Nevertheless, horses and donkeys were eaten in Great Britain, particularly in Yorkshire, till 1930s II.

Consumption in Italy is twice as large as in France. *The Daily Mail* considers an account of around 100 000 living horses or carcasses being yearly transported in the European Union to be eaten in France, Belgium or other (Scandinavia in particular)III. In France hippophagic consumption (2% of the whole meat) is concentrated around Paris and the Nord-Pas de Calais.

Germany has long been well known in feeling a dislike for horsemeat. Nevertheless horse butcher's shops took off sooner than in France, in traditional horse-riding areas, such as eastern Prussia. Switzerland is another interesting example of mix, at the fringe of Latin and Germanic countries. Romanic French-speaking people feel quite the same attraction to hippophagy as in France or Italy. German-speaking people are more cautious in the doing, but it is opening out.

Scandinavian countries are traditionally hippophagic. In Denmark, hippophagy has strongly declined. Horsemeat was considered a food for prisoners and poor persons. The slaughter of the horse was considered impure: it was confided to a caste of knackers, considered as "untouchables", the *Rakkerne* (Delavigne, 2002: 31).

3. Historical trend of this taboo in Europe

During Prehistory horse flesh was somehow a staple. Archaezoologist Marylène Patou-Mathis wrote:
"Wild horses were present in the Northern Hemisphere since the beginning of Paleolithic till the end of the 19th Century (...). In Europe, during cold and dry climatic phases, they were even part of the favorite game of Neanderthal and the first modern men. On multiple occasions herds of wild horses were hunted by beating and ambush as in the narrow valley below the famous Roche de Solutré (Saône-et-Loire). This extensive hunting continued until the beginning of the Neolithic period. Horse was domesticated around 3500 BD, not for its flesh (meat was supplied by other wild and domesticated animals), but for traction and carriage (a horse can carry four times more than a man). Very soon, horses became animals to be ridden, then hunting and war assistants. Not everybody ate horse flesh. For example, it was eaten by the Francs, only if it didn't result from a mangy horse, but it was not eaten by Goths who considered horse as a noble animal" (Patou-Mathis, 2009: 95).

Even if there might have been some competition between the alimentary use and the utilitarian use of horses, hippophagy was nonetheless present in numerous Pre-historic civilizations. Numerous tribes in the ancient times ate horsemeat, as Frederick Simoons stresses:

"Horse sacrifice and eating go back to the very roots of the Indo-European experience. This is consistent with abundant evidence from Copper, Bronze, and Iron Age burials and art of peoples believed to be Indo-European, as well as from

[II] Matthew Fort, *Eating Up Italy: Voyages on a Vespa*, 2005, p. 253.
[III] Rawstone, "The English horses being sent to France to be eaten", *Daily Mail*, May 19th 2007.

written records of early Indo-Europeans from Western Europe to Scythia, which bear rich testimony to the sacrifice of horses to deceased persons and to gods, to the special association the horse enjoyed with various deities, and to the eating of horsemeat. In Europe, horse eating and/or sacrifice were found among early Indo-Europeans in the Ukraine, Russia, Scandinavia, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and elsewhere. At some times and places, horseflesh was a sacrificial food. At others, it seems to have been an ordinary food. In either case, crushed or fragmented bones and skulls of horses are found in various Bronze Age sites in Central and Eastern Europe, most animals apparently eaten after they were no longer useful for riding, packing, and traction" (Simoons, 1994: 180).

It is interesting to note that the current hippophagic culture of some countries have very old roots, as in Russia. There are some areas in the world which have always been hyppophagic, long before the industrial revolution and the birth of a working class. "In northern Europe, horse killing and eating are well documented for the early Slavs, and for the initial period of Slavic civilization, in Russia and elsewhere, horsemeat is described as a typical food" (Simoons, 1994: 183).

One of the problems concerning the measure of how widespread hippophagy used to be is due to the link between hippophagy and religion. Among early Germanic peoples, "horse flesh was eaten in sacrificial dinners. There is also abundant evidence of horse burial in Scandinavia and elsewhere among Germanic peoples. (...) In various prehistoric sites in Ireland, horse bones have been found along with bones of other animals, to confirm the eating of horseflesh there. Some horseflesh may have become available when horses were killed for eating, whereas other horseflesh became available on ritual occasions" (Simoons, 1994: 185).

Simoons hints at a link between reluctance for hippophagy among Romans and Christian prohibition published in 732 AD. "Though horse sacrifice did occur in Greece and Rome, people there seem to have ignored completely the horse as food, apart from using its products as medicine. Indeed, the Romans were disgusted with the idea of eating horses, and did so only when there was no alternative but starvation. These attitudes seem to have been taken over the Catholic church, and with the introduction of Christianity to northern Europe, pressure was exerted to eliminate horse eating along with other pagan customs. In some cases, the pressure was subtle: the Penitential of Archbishop Ecbert ruled that horseflesh was not prohibited, but added, in what like a hint, that many families would not buy it. In time, however, the strict view prevailed, and the Catholic church made a serious attempt to stamp out the practice. In Ireland in the ninth Century, for example, a handbook for use by confessors required that horse eaters do penance for three and half years. (...) Pope Gregory III ordered Boniface, apostle of the Germans, to forbid the eating of horseflesh, which he had tolerated until that time (732). Boniface did not succeed at once, for he later wrote to Pope Zachary I, who succeeded Gregory, that horse eating remained a barrier to conversion. In any case, all groups that were subsequently converted were also pressured to give up the practice" (Simoons, 1994: 187).

In 732, Pope Gregory III instructed Saint Boniface to suppress the pagan practice of eating horses, calling it a "filthy and abominable customIV". His edicts are based on the same scripture as the Jewish prohibitions and this ban remained until the 18th Century. The christianization of Iceland in 1000 AD was achieved only when the Church promised that Icelanders could continue to eat horsemeat; once the Church had consolidated its power, the allowance was discontinued. Horsemeat is still popular in Iceland and is sold and consumed in the same way as beef, lamb and pork.

Historian François Sigaut questions the vulgate on the so-called ban on hippophagy by pope Grégoire III in 732. To him, this prohibition was a made-up story (Sigaut, 1992). Medievalist Alain Dierkens states that the condemning horse consumption should not be linked to religious standards but rather to the development of the nobiliary and military values, which gradually bring respect for the horse (Dierkens, 2008). The papal letters of 732 and 751 are not normative documents and they come from bishops of Greek origin (Gregory III and Zachary I). In the Oriental Church and for some rigorous clerks, certain dietary restrictions of the Old Testament were maintained during the High Middle Ages. "We kept a sufficient number of explicit texts to be able to assert that horse meat consumption did not raise major doctrinal problems in the Carolingian Empire" Alain Dierkens concludes.

If hippophagy was "officially" prohibited in 732 AD by the Roman Catholic Church, the thing was recurrent during the whole Middle-AgeV: "Horse eating persists nevertheless, and horse flesh was

[IV] For more details about the place of the horse in the Germanic paganism, see Marc-André Wagner (2005).

[V] For more details, see Madeleine Ferrières (2007: 444-445).

still appreciated in European pasture areas. In Switzerland, Christian monks still ate horse during the 11th Century, in spite of the papal ban, promulgated four centuries before. Irish people too infringed this prohibition. Feasts of equine meat were still organized in Denmark during the 16th Century. In Spain, it is under the name of "red deer" that foals were eaten, whereas horsemeat was regularly used to feed crews in the Navy" (Farb and Armelagos, 1985: 195). Ghislaine Bouchet adds that the horse flesh trade was forbidden during the 18th Century, but illicit trading came to light now and then, and numerous decrees were issued (19 mars 1762; 31 mars 1790).

Nowadays a great part of the European people loathe horsemeat, but it is considered as edible food : "The horse appears as such in the books which list edible and uneatable foodstuffs, together with the donkey, the mule or, in a more exotic way, the reindeer, the bear and the rat. (...) The English encyclopaedists who consider the consumption of frogs' legs or snails as a heresy and a moral scandal, do not need to call upon the pope or upon the law to justify their abstention" (Ferrières, 2007: 445). A witness says how delicious the taste of horsemeat is: "In the 18th Century, an antique dealer of Thurnaw (Bamberg), member of the royal Science Society of London, Jean-George Keysler (1689-1743) protested strongly against this prejudice, which was deprived of any foundation, and wondered that a meat so delicious was not appreciated and was always prohibited" (Bouchet, 1993: 219).

4. Acceptance of horse eating in France: To what extent is the notion of pleasure present in the promotion of horsemeat consumption in France?

After this brief study of the phobia of horsemeat in different cultures throughout centuries, I suggest we focus on the French situation in the 19th and 20th centuries to see how a food taboo can wear off and come back very quickly in a hundred years only. We will also study the French contemporary situation since it is interesting to notice that the taste of horsemeat - very often obscured in the books dealing with hippophagy – can finally be tackled.

In France, horsemeat was eaten from time to time during breaking events: the French Revolution, Napoleonic campaigns, the Siege of Paris (1870-1871), but it was not a choice for food. The Cambacérès case in 1839 marks an evolution in the minds. The setting up of a horse slaughtering place in the St-Denis plain put an end to the illicit cutting up of carcasses in Montfaucon. A statement from the Conseil d'Etat in 1841 concluded in favor of a slaughtering installation, allowing the selling of cooked horsemeat to feed pigs. The sanitary council in Paris approved[VI].

During the Restoration (1815-1830) hippophagy supporters struggled over moral intentions[VII]. Three public health specialists were heading the movement: the physician Alexandre Jean-Baptiste Parent-Duchâtelet (1790-1836), zoologist Isidore Geoffroy St-Hilaire (1805-1861) and the military veterinary Emile Decroix (1821-1901). Their arguments were laid down as follows:

* Sanitary arguments: Horse meat does not raise more sanity risks than any other meat. It is rich in iron (near of 4 mg for 100 g of meat), and even recommended in certain cases. Heme iron is more suitable and easily absorbed than others from different origins: vegetables, eggs, and dairy products. During the 19th Century, physicians recommended eating horsemeat in case of melancholy or persisting weariness. When raw beef was found dangerous because of the taenia, before the Great War they said raw horsemeat came safe: "The Assistance Publique (Welfare services) gave the example and the hospitals generally, and sanatoriums in particular, became important consumers of horsemeat, while it also became fashionable to give it to the children considered delicate, and in times of tuberculosis danger they all were, some raw meat bought, if possible, directly from the slaughterhouse" (Guillaume, 1994: 313).

* Social argument: Horse meat was cheap and suitable to feed the poor and the working classes.

* Ethical argument: If the horse was valuable and useful after its working life (ploughing, riding, and carrying) its owner would not ill-treat it, to preserve the animal value before it was slaughtered. So the SPA (Society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, created in 1845) backed up the hippophagic cause.

What about the taste of the food?

In 1861, Isidore Geoffroy St-Hilaire recalled the antiquated notions: "For a long time horsemeat was considered as sweetish, unpleasant to the taste, very hard and, as a matter of fact, difficult to eat. Even today, most people think and say it is

[VI] Rapport du Conseil d'Etat d'avril 1841. Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, Ms CP 4819.
[VII] For more details, see Sylvain Leteux (2005).

such" (Geoffroy St-Hilaire, 1861: 132). He stated that horsemeat "is acknowledged as good by the most different peoples in their ways of living and the most diverse races: Negro, Mongolian, Malay, American, Caucasian". Sometimes deceitfully presented as deer, "it was also declared as such by all those who subjected it to quality tests, by all those who have tasted it in adequate conditions, that is stale enough and issued from healthy and rested horses. It is then excellent roasted, and if it is not so good boiled, it is precisely because it makes one of the best stock, the best maybe, which we know. And it was even found good when it came (...) from animals that had not been fattened and aged sixteen, nineteen, twenty or even twenty three years old". He however acknowledged that the horsemeat is "undeniably tasty, without being however as good as that of beef or fattened lamb" (Geoffroy St-Hilaire, 1861: 134).

According to Alexandre Dumas, "horse meat is not exactly bad, but needs to be strongly flavored; and especially to be eaten without prejudicesVIII". The article entitled "Horse" in his *Dictionnaire de cuisine* (1873) is instructive:

"Eating horse meat is a proverbial expression which means eating an indeed very hard meat: horse meat is more tightened than beef. It is red, oily. Although it is very nitrogenous and consequently very nourishing, it is very doubtful that it could ever be part of daily food consumption. M. de Saint-Hilaire tried in vain with his horse meat feasts to establish definitively this animal in the Parisian butcher's shops; it is likely that the noble animal which man associates with his military glory will be used for food only in special circumstances like blockade and famine. As long as the horse will not be raised, fed or manured like the ox, in order to be eaten, it will have to be served on the table only in difficult times. Only then, you can say that horse meat and beef are similar, and then you can prepare it as you want or as you can".

Nowadays savour and taste is put forward by the horsemeat industry: "Horse meat possesses a unique sweet flavour due to the presence of glycogen in the muscle that is more important than in other meats. All the amateurs will say it, what characterizes it best is its extreme tenderness due to the process of unique maturation that softens its muscular fibers. Its texture, always delicious and tender, is appreciated as much by small amateurs as big meat connoisseurs. The gourmets and the purists agree to say that the Tartar is only equine, but horsemeat also cooks according to numerous recipes. It is then preferable to prepare it rare. It must be seized, whatever the type of cooking is wished (roasted, grilled, braised)IX".

Hippophagic banquets were set up in Germany in 1842 and in France in 1855. Hippophagy was made legal in France in 1866. "France was then late on the other European countries, where the sale was authorized: Austria, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, and Switzerland. In Berlin, the first horse butcher's shop appeared in 1847" (Bouchet, 1993: 220).

Between 1870 and 1960 in France hippophagy took off, following the increasing of urban working classes, but it declined in the years 1960-70. Horses were not used in ploughing or carrying, and cars, lorries, traction-engines were put in the place of them. It was necessary to import carcasses from abroad to meet the demand. Ethnologist Jean-Pierre Digard, specialist of the taming of the horse, indeed summarizes the situation:

"At the beginning of the 1970s, with the aim of saving the draught races of the agricultural collapse, the French administration of Stud farms wanted to go further into the way of the horse eating and led a campaign, active but debated, to set up a complete "horsemeat sector" and try a reconversion of these races in races with meat. An equine breeding directed to the butcher's shop existed already more or less in countries like Belgium, Holland, French-speaking Switzerland or Northern Italy, where horse eating had settled down in the food customs (...). One and a half century after the horse campaigns of the mid-19th Century and in front of the rise of new popular sensibilities opposed to hippophagy, horse butchery shows evident signs of a long-lasting, maybe irreversible crisis today which could indeed be fatal. And so in France, in spite of an active politicy of support, the consumption of horsemeat has fallen in a continuous way from 90 000 tons in 1970 to 60 000 tons in 1990 then to 30 000 tons in 2000, entailing a collapse from the 45 000 ton production in 1970 to 11 000 tons in 1990 and 13 000 tons in 2000 (a revival due to the crisis of the ESB on the bovine meat), the deficit being filled by imports of live horses from Poland and in the form of carcasses mainly from Argentina and the USA. As a result horsemeat suffers from an additional handicap: it has become an expensive meat. Western hippophagy could thus be limited to a short interlude - one and a half century-, from

[VIII] Alexandre Dumas (1873), "Boucher", *Dictionnaire de cuisine*.

[IX] Dossier de presse du CIV (Centre d'information des viandes) sur la viande chevaline.

which draught races may come out still a little more weakened" (Digard, 2004: 183).

The sanitary quality of horsemeat has dimmed since the 1960s : " If the horse meat benefits from a healthy image connected to its deep red color, this image was tarnished by the epidemics of trichinose in particular in Paris (in 1976, 1985, 1993). Actually, horses are sensitive to this parasitosis which can be transmitted to Man through the ingestion of minced or under-cooked meat, which is its common mode of consumption. Considering this possible sanitary risk, and by virtue of the precautionary principle, not yet considered as such, the Conseil supérieur de l'hygiène forbade in 1967 horsemeat in schools and university canteens. Children and young people do not get used to eating it. Besides, a decree of September 1989 forbade the sale of pre-cooked horsemeat. All these elements entailed a fall of the consumption, aggravated still by the changes in tastes, horsemeat being judged too flat or too bitter" (Hubscher, 2004: 149).

Since 1866 horsemeat trading has played a subordinate part in France for the meat has to be sold in specific horse-butcher shops and not in the same place as other meat (beef, veal, pork). Caterers in France, obviously, do not provide horsemeat in the restaurants, whereas they do in Italy and Switzerland. On the other hand horsemeat is authorized in local communities in France. The selling of horsemeat has been authorized in supermarkets for some years. But in 2008, January, the French SPA sent a memorendum to the supermarkets to invite them to take away horsemeat from their departments because of the « brutality of transport and the state in which horses arrive at the slaughterhouse". They added: « At first loved and cared for, whatever its merits, the good horse won't know a peaceful retreat: from the first failure, it becomes fresh meat and will be driven to the slaughterhouse overnight ». After what Champion and Casino pledged they will no more offer to buy such a meat.

Fighter for the cause, the interference of animal protecting associations can explain the bias against hippophagy. People are prone to consider horse as a pet. Horse transport and slaughtering are insufferable in the minds of many. The Brigitte Bardot Foundation (since 1986) has led striking operations to this aim (spots on French television in 1994 and 2007, placards in the underground and the RER). So the moral taboo against which health specialists struggled hard in the 19th Century is being revived.

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Differences between Patients and Staff's Perception of Food Provision in Malaysian Public Hospitals

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Abstract

Patient's nutritional needs are often not met simply because the foodservice system does not cater appropriately (Incalzi et al., 1996; Gall, 1998; Barton et al., 2000; Almdal et al., 2003). Realising the impact of food provision, this study was conducted to understand food provision in Malaysian public hospitals. Five groups were interviewed face-to-face (total=38 respondents; 18 patients and 20 staff). Semi-structured interviews were conducted and data was analysed using content analysis to identify factors associated with food consumption. Study established an in-depth understanding of how hospital foodservice works and its effects on patients' preferences and food consumption. Patients and staff represented different perspectives with conflicting expectations, although there were some elements which both groups agreed on. Hospital food was signified as a source of enjoyment, therefore patients expected alteration on various aspects of hospital food provision. However, staff failed to identify factors that contributed towards patients' conceptualisation of hospital food, which resulted in poor acceptance of hospital food.

Keywords: hospital food, food consumption, staff, patients, preferences

1. Introduction

Compromised food consumption among patients is a huge problem, as studies have associated food consumption with undernutrition (Schindler et al., 2010; Westergren et al., 2008; Green, 1999), prolonged hospitalisation (Waitzberg and Correia, 2003; Chima et al., 1997; Arrowsmith, 1997), slow recovery (Bauer et al., 2007; Schneider et al., 2004) and mortality (Hiesmayr et al., 2009; Sorensen et al., 2008; Sullivan et al., 1999). Consumption of hospital food could be improved if patients' preferences are understood, as an individual's food consumption is affected by their attitude and the motives behind their choice (FjellstrÖm, 2004).

Patients usually have negative perception about hospital food, so expectations were usually compromised even before trying (Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Naithani et al., 2008). The situation is worsened by the service quality provided (Cumming, 2004). Providing food in hospitals can be challenging, as it involves both the catering and medical staff, who have different priorities. Hospital staff were reported to conduct their work in a characteristically routine manner, resenting interruptions, focusing on economy and efficiency, and disregarding the main purpose of food provision - better consumption (Dhoot et al., 1996; Garrow, 1994). Therefore, there is need to investigate the roles of different groups of staff involved in food provision, particularly their attitudes and practices.

Public hospitals in Malaysia were selected to understand patients' perception, and staff's role due to the lack of data and there is need to improve the quality of overall healthcare services (Suleiman and Jegathesan, 2000). Malaysians have diversified food consumption habits, owing to 'multi-ethnic' society. Population of Malaysia comprises of 67.4% of Malays, 24.6% of Chinese, 7.3% of Indians and 0.7% of Others (Department of Statistics, 2010). This means, much of Malaysian food can be traced back to particular ethnicity or culture, although assimilation of culture is also widely evident. Whether preferences of the diversified society are reflected in hospital food provision is unknown. Rice is the staple in Malaysia, with extensive use of ingredients such as spices, herbs and coconut milk in everyday dishes. However, consumption of certain food is often avoided, due to food beliefs among particular ethnic, or age group. For example, elderly Malays tend to avoid certain vegetables and fruits (Shahar et al., 2000). To date, there is lack of data indicating whether their food beliefs influence consumption when hospitalised. Similar to findings in other countries (Stanga et al., 2003; Pizam and Ellis, 1999; Dube et al., 1994), it is assumed that hospital food is not well accepted among Malaysians, but actual reasoning for their perception has not been investigated. Both patients and staff were identified as important key informants, due to their involvement in hospital food provision. Differences in perception among patients and staff are expected to provide insight on reasoning for patients' consumption of hospital food.

There are three types of hospitals in Malaysia, mainly government (n=135), private (n=112) and university teaching hospitals (n=3) (Ministry of Health, 2011). Originally, there were only public hospitals in Malaysia. As the country's economy grew, there were opportunities for private institutions to establish private hospitals. In this study, public hospitals were focused, as they constitute as the main provider of healthcare. In terms of food provision, whether the hospitals are situated in rural or urban area determines the scale of catering operated. In rural areas, hospitals were relatively small, which accommodates not more than 100 patients. Urban hospitals are big, hence could accommodate up to 1000 patients. In contrast to rural hospitals which uses 'decentralised' plating system and food is prepared by their own staff ('in-house'), 'centralised' plating system is used in urban hospitals, and food preparation is 'outsourced' to catering companies. In Table 1, comparison between 'in-house' and 'outsourced' catering system based on data obtained in this study are presented, indicating the main differences.

Table 1: Comparison between 'In-House' and 'Outsourced' Catering System

	In-House	Outsourced
Type of hospital	Rural	Urban
Size of hospital	Small	Large
Number of patients served	50	Up to 1000
Department Structure	Foodservice manager, two cooks, and one assistant cook	Foodservice manager overseas the operation by staff (20-30) from outsourced catering company
Number of Staff	4-5	20-30
Staff Qualification	O-level or relevant experience	Certificate or diploma in food preparation
Staff Responsibilities	Each staff have to multitask; - prepare food - cook - assemble food on trays, - wash up - deliver the food to wards	For each task, there are specific number of staff to carry out the task
Plating System	Decentralised	Centralised
Cooking method	Similar to home cooking	Mass catering
Food Ordering	Manually – orders sent twice a day	Intranet – paperless system, orders sent twice a day
Food Delivery	By Nurse or attendants	By kitchen staff/ porters
Menu Planning	By foodservice manager due to lack of Dieticians	By Dieticians

Public hospitals are subsidised by the government, whereby charges are based on a class system and minimal charge (Chee and Barrachough, 2007). Hospital food provision is governed by the class system, which was established as part of the Medical and Hospital Enactment 1957, and is still in use today. According to the class system, patients are charged for services according to classes - 1st, 2nd and 3rd, whereby 1st class patients pay the highest, while 3rd class patients pay the least. The government subsidises food provision to all patients, but the amount subsidised differs according to the classes. Even in the kitchen, food preparation is conducted according to classes (1st class, 2nd class and 3rd class). Impact of the class system is unknown, especially on types and quality of food served. Along with patient's diversified background, factors such as catering system, plating system and class system could affect their preferences and conceptualisation of hospital food.

2. Methodology

Main data collection method was 'semi-structured interview', where patients were interviewed face-to-face. 'Semi-structured interview' was used, as it is the best method to understand the 'what', 'how' and 'why' questions (Silverman, 2010). Both staff and patients were identified using 'purposive sampling' method, where individuals who could provide particular information were recruited. Patients were recruited as they were the key persons who experience provision of food, and nurses were regarded as 'middle persons' between patients and staff who have good insight about patients' experiences. Foodservice managers were included as they were responsible in preparation and delivery of food. Dieticians were selected because they are responsible in ensuring patients' nutritional status. Doctors' role in patients' nutritional care was usually not investigated due to their indirect involvement in food provision, but their role is regarded as essential. The spokespersons for hospital foodservice entity in Malaysia – the Head and Deputy of Dietetics and Foodservice, Ministry of Health were also included to understand the administration and policy aspects.

Study was conducted in six public hospitals, considerating aspects such as location

(rural or urban), plating system ('centralised' or 'decentralised'), and catering system ('outsourced or in-house'). A total of 18 patients (11 males and 7 females) were included. From ethnicity perspective, 14 patients were Malays, 3 were Chinese and 1 was Indian. Patients were aged from 18-75 years old, with majority of patients 21-55 years old. Only patients from general wards and on normal diets were interviewed during their rest time. Reasons for admission ranged from dengue, gastric asthma and minor operation. Average number of hospitalisation was 1-5 days. Patients from 2nd and 3rd class were included, and 1st class patients were excluded due to limited number of patients available to participate.

Other respondents - the staff were volunteers who were willing to share their opinions. A total of 20 staff were interviewed, which included 6 nurses, 6 foodservice managers, 3 dieticians, 3 doctors and 2 Ministry staff (Head of Dietetics and Foodservice and Deputy Dietetics and Foodservice). Interviews lasted approximately 30-40 minutes and were digitally recorded. Recorded interviews were translated and transcribed using 'content analysis'. Content analysis was a useful tool, as it employed a systematic structure of analysing data (Flick, 2006). It was beneficial in identifying key themes which emerged frequently and to establish the connection between the themes clearly visible. Overall data administrations, from transcribing the audio files to deriving at the results were conducted using NVivo8 software.

3. Results

Results were categorised into themes that emerged – 'meaning of food', 'familiarity of food', 'influences of food attributes on eating behaviour', 'privilege to choose', 'feeling cared for by staff' and 'eating environment'. For most of them, it was not the first time being admitted, and only for 5 patients it was their 1st time. Patients were either from 2nd class (n=6) or 3rd class (n=12), as there were relatively more patients admitted in 3rd class. Equal number of patients were recruited from 'outsourced' (n=9) and 'in-house' hospitals (n=9). A total of 12 staff were from 'outsourced' hospitals and 8 staff from 'in-house' hospitals. There were more staff from 'outsourced' hospitals, mainly because of there was no Dieticians in rural hospitals.

▪ 3.1. Meaning of Food

Mealtimes were anticipated by patients, as they choose not to think about their health condition, which often resulted in depression. Patients interpreted hospital food as healthy choice and essential for healing. Patients were certain that hospital food was healthy, mainly because of the ingredients used (e.g. less oil, limited use of coconut milk) and cooking method (e.g. steamed, boiled). Serving healthy food was appreciated, but food was only consumed when perceived as tasty. Although hospital food was regarded as 'healing' food, not many consumed due to reasons such as 'taste', 'temperature', 'presentation' and 'familiarity of food'. Despite having their own conceptualisation of hospital food, acceptance was influenced by a number of factors, which compromised their consumption. In agreement, staff attributed patients' reluctance in accepting hospital food to quality of food served. However, staff did not understand what food signified to patients.

"I think patient do not understand why hospital food is prepared in a particular way, they do not regard the importance of hospital food as part of treatment" (nurse, female, in-house hospital)

"Hospital food means healthy food, to me hospital food supposed be healthy – less oil, all healthy ingredient used because it part of treatment. But I will eat better if it taste nicer" (patient, female, "in-house" hospital, 3rd class)

▪ 3.2. Familiarity of Food

Familiarity of food was mostly discussed from the perspective of preferences for local dishes, which differed according to location (north, south, east or west Malaysia). This was recognised by foodservice managers in each area, hence menus were altered accordingly. As a result, hospital food was well received, as there was a 'recollection' element present. This contributed to a positive eating experience, where patients anticipated in consuming hospital food. However, preferences for local dishes were only addressed in rural hospitals.

"I like the fact that they try to serve food that is similar to home… like I know they add some sugar in the rice. When I eat I feel the food is same as home, and it makes me want to eat more" (Patient 1, male, East Peninsular Malaysia)

"Patient's decision really depends on their preferences for local food in general and

appetite at particular time. Most people here like to eat 'tempeh' [fermented soya tofu], so we have to serve Tempeh here" (Foodservice manager 4, Central Peninsular Malaysia)

However, patients' preferences were not reflective of their ethnicity. This was worsened by lack of variety and repetition of food, which lead to consumption of food from outside. As a result, patients were frustrated, angered and saddened. Nurses recognised the issue, but this was not conveyed to the kitchen staff. Hence necessary amendments according to patients' preferences were not possible. Lack of collaboration between the medical and foodservice department is therefore identified as one the factors that leads to patients' preferences not addressed.

One of the most distressing moments was when food against their religious was consumed accidently. Chinese (who were Buddhists) and Indians (who were Hindu) were insecure and not confident to consume hospital food, as they were not aware of the ingredients used. In contrary, foodservice managers and dieticians were positive that food was served according to all religion. Regardless of patients' background, desserts were identified as familiar food that encouraged consumption. However, underlying issues such as serving whole fruit, which was often wasted due to patients' inability to bite, hindered them from consuming. To date, snacks or in-between meals were not served, but are seen as a strategy that could encourage better consumption. This was particularly evident in hospitals where the number of meals had been reduced from six to four. Familiarity of food is indeed an important aspect, which influences patients' consumption. Better food provision is only possible upon meticulous and careful considerations factors such as local food preferences, ethnicity and religion.

- **3.3 Influences of Food Attributes on Eating Behaviour**

Food attributes such as presentation, taste and temperature were regarded as the main influences on patients' food consumption, by both patients and staff. Presentation was the first impression of food, which provided cues to patients on whether to eat hospital food or not. Patients felt more attention was given to 1st class food compared to other classes, due to differences in hospital charges. However, regardless of the classes, patients felt presentation of food was better when 'centralised' plating system was used, mainly due to neatly arranged food on the tray before served. This was agreed by almost all staff, expect doctors. Lack of knowledge on aspects related to food delivery among doctors was the reason.

Taste was perceived as bad by both patients and staff, and worsened when the service was 'outsourced' to catering companies. Compromised taste elicited negative emotions (e.g. anger and misery), and lead to consumption of food brought by their family. Lack of attention on food preparation (cooking method and ingredient used) were blamed for worsen taste in 'outsourced' hospitals by the foodservice managers. Besides, absences of ingredients such as coconut milk and flavour enhancers, which are often used in Malaysian home cooking, were associated with patients' disapproval of hospital food taste. Similar to presentation, taste was regarded better in 1st class by majority of the patients, but was not agreed by staff, especially by foodservice managers. However, it was noted that food preparation was often carried out according to classes in the kitchen. Knowledge on preparing 'tasty' hospital food is particularly lacking among staff to address this issue.

Temperature of food was also very important to patients, as it provided aroma and ensured the properties of food did not change (e.g. cold noodles were often hard to chew). Serving food at the right temperature was associated with feeling special, and subsequently better consumption.

"I don't like cold meals like soup served here. Food is not tasty when it is cold. Anyway, there is nothing that I could do about it…a bit helpless and sad because I have no choice then to eat" (Patient 7, Outsourced hospital)

"I felt special because my food was hot. I was also very happy to see the hospital taking extra effort to serve food hot. I appreciate it!"(Patient 17, in-house hospital)

Temperature was a profound issue in 'outsourced' hospitals, mainly due to the gap between food plating and serving time, and the distance between wards and kitchen. This issue could be resolved by serving food using 'trolleys with temperature control', but limited budget allocated to the foodservice department was a barrier. Such trolleys are currently limited to 1st class in 'outsourced' hospitals. Regardless of the type of catering system used, heating facilities are needed (e.g. microwave ovens in each ward), as patients

tend to consume cold food when they have appointments outside the ward. Although nurses highlighted this issue, there was question of who should be responsible of heating the food. Intervention at hospital or ministry level is needed, as purchasing any heating facilities relies on allocations. Besides, responsibilities of nurses and kitchen staff should be clearly identified for fast and effective food provision, which could ensure food served at the right temperature.

- **3.4 Privilege to Choose**

Currently, patients are not given menus to choose their meals, hence they do not know what is served before mealtime. A choice of 'spicy', 'non spicy' or 'vegetarian' were supposed to be provided, but due to heavy workload, nurses decide on behalf of patients except for 1st class patients. As a result, patients in 2nd and 3rd class felt very 'lowly', as failure of nurses to provide choices was associated with their inability to pay more for the services provided. Nurses' attitude was regarded as unacceptable by other staff. Patients also wanted to know information such as ingredients and nutritional content of the dishes made available for them. However, this was not welcomed by nurses, again due to extra workload attached to handing out menu to patients.

> "Yes! Patients should be given menu to choose... I don't eat food that they serve if I don't like" (Patient 4, 'in-house')

"I would suggest that we should give menu to patients. Give them some privilege" (Dietician 3, 'outsourced' hospital)

Current standard portion size often 'puts off' patients from eating, especially when portion size was perceived as more than they can consume. Larger portions were only requested for drinks and vegetable dishes. Both patients and staff felt making amendments to portion size was considered easier in the 'decentralised' system because food was plated in-front of patients. Request for different portion sizes was approved by doctors, as patients' appetite changes drastically, and substantial amount of food was often wasted. Other staff perceived unsuitable serving time resulted in request for different portion sizes. Therefore, changing the serving time, rather than portions sizes was suggested.

- **3.5 Feeling cared for by staff**

Caring for patients was regarded as nurses' responsibility because of amount of time spent with patients compared to other staff. All nurses felt they had very good relationship with patients, although this was not agreed by the patients. Placing food trays and walking away without any acknowledgment was regarded as unacceptable. Encouragement was important, as it helped patients to eat better, but was often very limited. Assistance was a form of empathy in patients' viewpoint. Assistances needed during mealtimes were seldom conveyed to nurses, due to fear of rejection and delay in providing assistance.

> "They just check our name, place the tray on the table and walk away, they don't say anything !" (Patient 7, outsourced hospital)

> "Patients complain that staffs do not greet them. Some nurses are rude to them when patients ask something about food" (Foodservice manager 5, outsourced hospital)

> "I don't think there are any encouragement given to patients, zero effort among most staff…" (Deputy Head of Foodservice and Dietetics, Ministry of Health)

Disturbance during mealtimes was rarely experienced, except when trainee doctors were around. They were regarded as insensitive and disrespectful towards patients' during mealtimes. They conduct medical procedures even when patients were consuming their meals. Agreeing with patients, all staff insisted disturbance was not an issue. Attitude of staff, especially when providing assistance and serving food affected patient's ability to consume. It also affected their self-esteem and level of comfort in conveying their needs. Impact of staff's attitude is evident, yet l improving their attitudes and practices is very limited and often based on their own initiative.

- **3.6 Eating Environment**

Sounds and smell in the ward were the main factors that made patients very uncomfortable. This was particularly evident in 3rd class wards, where most number of patients shares a room. Besides, strong disinfectants and cleaning liquids used, affected the way patients perceive their meals (e.g. food smell like medicine), made it difficult for them to consume.

> "In a 3rd class ward, its open space and there are many patients, so you tent to get all sort of smells and sounds. People

> crying in pain, coughing and vomiting are the obvious ones" (Patient 2, 3rd class)

As a result, a separate eating area is anticipated, which will also provide a good social environment (encourage interaction during consumption from staff's viewpoint).

> "The practice of eating on the bed is not clean … there is bedding and blankets that gets dirty, so should eat on a separate table if they can move" (Foodservice manager 1)

> "Patients will eat better if there is a separate dining area because they will be eating together with others. They won't be seeing blood, dirty things around them as well.." (Dietician 1)

Although separate dining area was anticipated, budget and cost of renovating the wards to accommodate a separate dining area was a barrier.

4. Discussion

This study not only indicated aspects that influenced patients' preferences and consumption of hospital food, but also indicated staff's role in influencing patient's eating experience. Figure 1 is conceptualised based on the findings, which indicates aspects present in patient's eating experiences, which subsequently affect their preference and consumption of hospital food.

▪ 4.1. Meaning of Food

Changes experienced due to treatment not only altered patients' capabilities to eat, but also shifted the focus from their disease to desire to experience a good eating experience. They look forward to an eating experience similar to when they were well, where the main objective of consumption was enjoyment. Watters et al., (2003) reported that patients wanted healthy choice, but Lassen et al., (2003) reported patients were least concerned about healthiness of food. Slightly different, patients in this study regarded serving healthy food as important, but they were only willing to consume if taste was not compromised. Patients associated hospital food positively, which was different compared with staffs' perceptions. Although food is accepted universally, which exist in every society and culture, its symbolic meaning differs across individuals and groups (FjellstrÖm, 2004), which contributed to differences in interpretation between patients and staff.

▪ 4.2. Familiarity of Food

Various aspects such as preferences for local dishes, ethnic and religious based food, lack of variety were associated with 'familiarity of food' served. Patients indicated that being sick was not the right time to experience new taste. Importance of familiarity of food is not new, and has been associated with better food consumption among patients (Lassen et al., 2005; Kondrup, 2002). Food habit was regarded as a cultural component that contributed greatly on intention to consume, and was often difficult to change (Canetti, 2002), which was evident in this study. Patients' diversified background reflected on their food habit. However, knowledge and awareness of various aspects in relation to 'familiarity of food' were lacking among staff. Staff should not undermine factors related to 'familiarity of food', as it is important in persuading patients to consume better (British Nutrition Foundation, 2003).

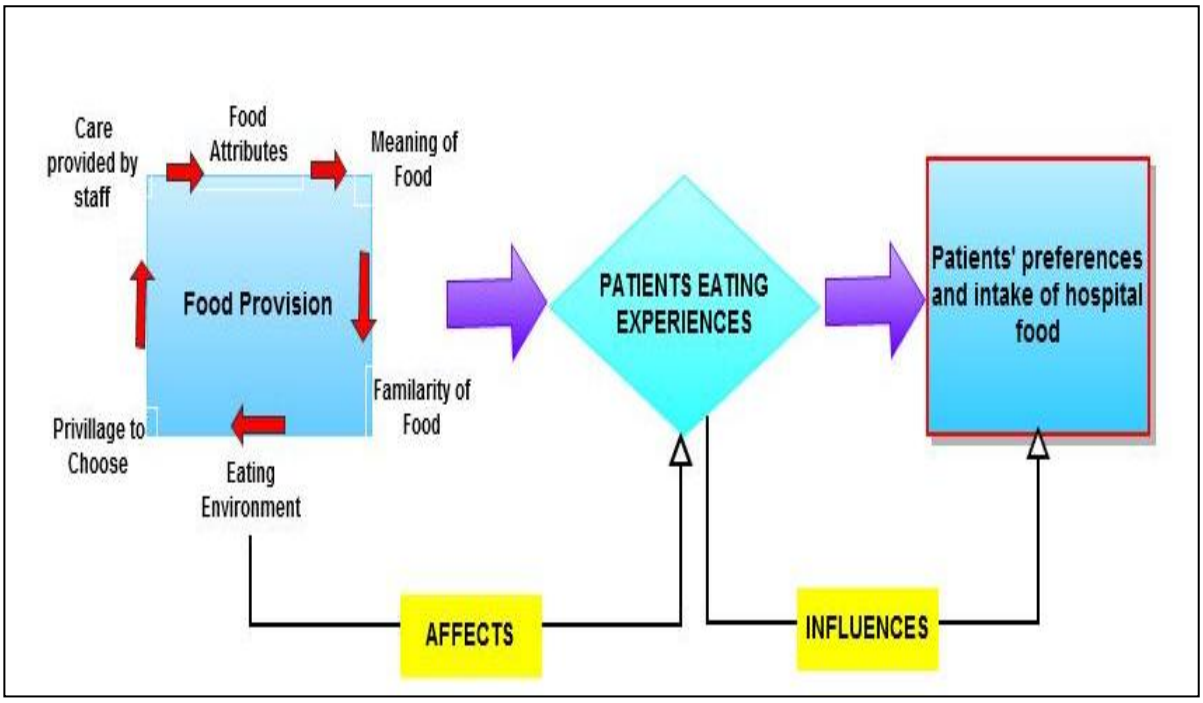

Figure 1: Aspects that Influenced Patient's Food Preference and Consumption

- **4.3. Influences of Food Attributes**

The impact of food attributes has been widely investigated (Johns et al., 2010, Tranter et al., 2009; Naithani et al., 2008). Although most studies indicated patients were usually dissatisfied with food attributes, some have indicated positive comments (Tranter et al., 2009; Mahoney et al., 20090). In this study, all three food attributes were negatively commented, mainly due to the practice of 'outsourcing' catering system and 'centralised' plating system. In many countries, outsourcing is replacing 'in-house' catering to improve the quality of patient care (Porter and Cant, 2009), but in this study patients and staff preferred 'in-house' catering. 'Centralised' plating is widely associated with better acceptance of hospital food (Engelund et al., 2007; Mibey and Williams, 2002), but results of this study indicated otherwise. In particular, 'centralised' plating was regarded as the best practice to improve presentation of food in this study, but it resulted in food being cold when served and did not allow patients to choose portion size required. Use of temperature controlled trolleys was justified as essential in improving temperature of food, which was also suggested by other researchers (Stanga et al., 2003; Hartwell et al., 2003). Providing food according to class has not been highlighted by other researchers, hence the impacts of practising such system were highlighted in this study. Both patients and staff felt food attributes differed according to class, and resulted in compromised acceptance and consumption. A classless system is anticipated to promote equality, since it is a service subsidised by the government. Classless system will also result in synchronisation of service provision; from food preparation in the kitchen to food delivery in the wards.

- **4.4. Privilege to Choose**

Allowing patients to choose was related to aspects such as absence of menu and different portion sizes. Although patients wanted choices, staff chose not to provide the menus, Besides, designing menus that provided a selection of portion sizes was regarded as a difficult task. The hospital menu was often could not met patient's nutritional requirements (Barton et al, 2000; Consrantinov and Jenkins, 2008) but in this study, focus was more on basic aspect such provision of printed menus and allowing patients to order. Besides, patients often feel they have minimal control and information on hospital food (Hedges, 2003), which also mentioned by patients in this study. Menus were often used as a tool to enhance desirability of food (Shoemaker et al., 2005), hence should be made available in Malaysia. High wastage is not new in hospitals (Dupertuise et al., 2003; Stanga et al., 2003), but over the years, wastage has been associated with foodservice management directly (Almdal et al., 2003; Edwards et al., 1999). More precisely, wastage was

associated with failure to allow patients to choose the type of food and portion size in this study. This was indirectly associated with staff's attitudes and practices in providing service to patients.

- **4.5. Feeling Cared for by Staff**

Staff, especially nurses involved in taking care of patients' welfare, simply because they were involved in a practice with an inherent moral aspect (Bishop and Scudder, 2001). Nurse who know how to combine authority and power sharing with other staff in patient care are regarded as proactive advocates (Sartorio and Zoboli, 2010). Patients in this study regarded most nurses as lacking in qualities described by Sartorio and Zoboli (2010), although patients' expectations were relatively low. Nematy et al., (2006) indicated that patients found it difficult to eat, regardless of the amount of encouragement they received. However, in this study patients felt encouragement increased food consumption, but was often not limited. Lack of assistance often manifested in low food consumption (Xia and McCutcheon, 2006), which was evident among Malaysian patient who faced difficulties in doing certain task by themselves during mealtimes. Importance of assistance has been highlighted by many researchers (Naithani et al., 2008; Dickinson et al., 2008). As a result, assistance from auxiliary staff (e.g. kitchen porters, volunteers) was introduced in many hospitals, which have improved consumption (Walton et al., 2008, Wright et al., 2008). However, Jefferies et al., (2011) reported better food consumption was experienced when nurses were actively involved in assisting patients, which was similar to this study. This was particularly evident among nurses and patients in rural area.

Lack of dieticians and 'service' like providing dietetic advice should be addressed, as it is associated with identification of malnourished patients and provision of effective interventions to address malnutrition (Westergren et al., 2008; Kyle et al., 2006). Consumption of outside food was prevalent among Malaysian patients, which was driven by cultural habits (e.g bringing food when visiting sick person), but also perception on hospital food. High wastage indicated patients were either experiencing decreased food consumption or consuming outside food, which was usually not suitable for their particular health condition. Importance of adequate and suitable food should not be undermined, as it is a risk factor for mortality among hospitalised patients (Hiesmayr et al., 2009). Patients were unaware of the impact of consuming food brought from outside, especially when they have particular health condition.

- **4.6. Eating Environment**

Factors such as the presence of others, time of consumption, smell, colour and physical settings influenced food consumption and food choice in general population (Stroebele and Castro, 2004). In particular, smell and sounds were highly associated with patients' food consumption, which advocated the need for a separate dining area in each ward. The dining surroundings, complemented by the company of others had improved food consumption (Engelund et al., 2007), and patients especially elderly appreciated social interaction when meals were consumed in a separate dining area (Wright et al., 2006). Adding to this, study highlighted consumption depended on number of patients shared a room, which elevated discomfort due to unpleasant smells and sounds present in the environment. Changing the eating environment was agreed by both patients and staff to encourage better consumption.

5. Conclusion

Different dimensions of a meal could be observed when focus differed in terms of time, space and social contact (FjellstrÖm, 2004), which was very true when the eating environment changed among hospitalised patients. Factors such as 'multi-ethnic' society and class system were unique to Malaysia, and influenced greatly on patients' consumption. Other factors reported before, such as plating system and catering system also influenced their consumption. Overall, patients were very particular about the cultural and social aspects of consumption. In contrast, staff were more concerned about food provision in a manner that was convenient to them, often disregarding impact of their attitudes and practices on patients' acceptance and consumption of hospital food. In many aspects, staff especially nurses understood patients' preferences, but staff's attitude and working style was a barrier for patients to enjoy hospital food. Findings discussed in this paper are useful in restructuring food provision in hospitals with similar hospital organisation as public hospitals in Malaysia. It is also valuable since perspectives of various stake-holders within the hospital foodservice system were analysed. However, findings could be complemented with quantitative data, which will provide insight on extend of the compromised food consumption among Malaysian patients.

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Eating with the fear of weight gain: The relationship with food for overweight women in France

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Abstract

The relationship with food is shaped by numerous characteristics such as class, gender or culture. In western societies, where overweight and obesity are increasingly important, several questions emerge: can the concept of over-weight contribute to helping understand the relationship with food? Can differences be found in the behaviour or representations of overweight and obese women?

To answer these questions, 35 semi-structured interviews were undertaken, transcribed, coded and analysed. Fifteen were with obese women (BMI above 30) and twenty with overweight women (BMI between 25 and 30). The objective of the research was to develop an overview of the discourses of what these thirty-five respondents thought. The article then uses some significant cases to better illustrate the complexity of the findings.

These interviews indicate that the desire to lose weight and the fear of gaining weight introduce a binary conception of food, between 'good' or 'bad' foodstuffs. Social influence on the respondents' food practices is not only found in such categorizations, but also in their relationship with food in general. Several eaters' profiles were taken as 'ethoses', in other words as typical profiles, allowing therefore to further understand the possible dynamic answers of individuals. These ethoses demonstrate the various possible links with food, before tackling the issue of the popular spread of certain types of behaviours.

From the analysis it emerged that the relationship with food does not depend solely on the BMI of the individual but rather of a set of factors, which interact with each other. The notion of 'control' in the discourse of respondents proved the influence of media and medical discourses on the representation of food for overweight or obese women, and the increasing trivialization of everyday conflictual relationship with food.

Keywords: Food, Obesity, Weight, Eating Disorders

1. Introduction

Eating is charged with nutritional, affective, relational and psychological dimensions. Many researchers have been able to show the growing anxiety of eaters. This 'gastro-anomie' (Fischler, 1990) means an absence of rules which destabilizes consumers but also leads to the excessive medicalization of food practices, prohibiting food (starchy food at times, sugar at others, and so on and so forth) or prescribing identical solutions for everyone (with the National Health Nutrition Programme in France for instance; Poulain, 2009). Nowadays, food practices appear to be characterized not only by a change in product choice (Mennell et al., 1992; Poulain, 2002) but also by a transformation of food rituals (Fischler, 1990; Murcott, 1997). These transformations are also influenced by media representations and advertisements.

Furthermore, there is an ambivalence in the connection between individuals and food. It is biologically necessary to eat certain foods rather than other types. In addition, certain foodstuffs are culturally and socially preferred, limited or forbidden. This highly symbolic hidden dimension allows everyone to develop their own tastes and significances, even their own rationality. If it is universal in a specific culture to classify and prioritize edibles (following religious and cultural taboos) and this categorization determines eating habits and social revulsions, some studies have also proved that it is current for individuals to combine together certain foods, whether according to their nutritional family, their energy functions, individuals' preferences. These classifications thus depend on representations of foodstuffs or nutrients, torn between necessary variety and food fears.

These tensions are often closely connected, as demonstrated by that of fat and cholesterol, whose portrayal as health damaging, numerous authors have shown to be medically unjustified (Apfelbaum, 1996). If the rejection of some foodstuffs is not justified for religious reasons, they can nevertheless be considered 'taboo' in the social sense of the term (Nemeroff, 1994). By virtue of the quasi-religious vision of health which they bear out, in that individuals' representations of food never depend only on the food's objective properties, but also on their beliefs about this food. This form of 'magico-moral' rationale (Nemeroff, 1994) attempts to draw on scientific truths. This moral and magical vision of food leads to consider that 'one is what one eats' following the principle of incorporation belonging to magical thought (Rozin, 1994). This principle of incorporation manifests itself through the contagion principle and the principle of similitude (Frazer, 1988). The medical and nutritional rejection of fats and sugar serves for instance to justify, through the principle of similitude, the rejection of all foods whose content is perceived as a body-pollutant. Through the contagion principle, when somebody eats 'bad' food, they themselves become 'bad' because 'the eater is analogically transformed by what he eats. So, he acquires some of his eating's characteristics (Fischler, 1996). If 'bad' or 'taboo' food is consumed (fat for example), the people who eat it are also considered as 'bad' or 'immoral'. So, people are object of moral judgment depending on what they eat.

According to these moralized representations of food, people with excess body weight accumulate two moral failings, linked through a shared sense: that of failing to avoid gaining weight and of ill-health. While the medical consequences of excess body weight might often be dramatized (notably in the case of the medically highly controversial category of overweight), obesity is now already considered as an illness, whilst being healthy (and thin, particularly for women) has become a kind of social duty. The surveillance and the medical supervision of bodies exercised by the State in the XIXth century (Foucault, 2004) shifted towards self-control of the individuals themselves, these henceforth became responsible for their health (Elias, 1991). A balanced diet is made to appear more valuable, through a moral vision of temperance (Masson, 2001). The secularization and the medicalization of such morals gives further value to responsible and rational eaters, who know 'what one must eat' and conscientiously apply nutritional rules.

Given that over-weight[I] women are constantly encouraged to lose weight, we could assume that over-weight is a useful criterion to understand differences of eating habits. For example, according to some theorists, the over-weight body is a form of rebellion *against patriarchal society* (Orbach, 1978). Furthermore, the sociology has already showed that there were differences in food representations and practices between individuals, according to their socio-economic status (Prattala et al., 1992; Régnier, 2006), their cultural origin (Parker et al., 1995; Corbeau, 2002) or their gender (Murcott, 1983; Germov and Williams 2008). Food representations are linked with social representations of the body, which also

[I] We write 'overweight' to speak about the medical category and 'over-weight' to speak of a general excess weight.

depend on sociological influences. The social representations of the body are different according to times and cultures. Formerly the over-weight body was a synonym of wealth (particularly the male body, Fischler, 1987), today it mainly related to lower classes. That is why whereas thinness is a sign of social distinction (Bourdieu, 1979), lower class women are less encouraged to look slim (Ball and Crawford, 2005) and more tolerant of their over-weight than upper class women (Wardle and Griffith, 2001).

The literature also shows that differences in terms of weight exist in relationship with dieting. We can distinguish 'overweight' and 'obesity', following the Body Mass Index (BMI). According to the Obepi study, 12.4 % of French people were obese in 2006 and 29.2% overweight. Amongst women, 23.3 % were overweight and 13.0% obese (Obepi, 2006). According to the ANSES report, 53.8 % of the obese women are or have been on a weight loss diet in the year preceding the survey in France, but only 39.5 % of the overweight women and 33.0% of the women having a BMI between 22 and 25 (ANSES, 2010). But is over-weight or obesity useful to explain the relationship with food habits in general? Are food practices of obese women more 'pathological' than overweight women? Are their discourses very different?

Several studies have showed that there are many differences between these two medical categories, in terms of definition (obesity is defined as an 'illness'), social discriminations in social interactions (Puhl and Brownell, 2001), at work (Paraponaris et al, 2005), at school (Cramer and Steinwert, 1998), with nurses or doctors (Myers et Rosen, 1999; Poon and Tarrant, 2009). Some cases will allow to show whether what the respondents say about their body and their weight depends on their over-weight or not, and what are their strategies, their success or their failures in their attempts to create and to maintain a balance between food pleasure, aestheticism and health.

First, this article will set out the impact of these social discourses on the respondents' eating representations. Analysing their foodstuffs representations will be a good way to understand if the fact of being over-weight has consequences on food representations, beliefs and behaviours.

Secondly, the relationship with food habits in general amongst overweight respondents and obese respondents will be contrasted and compared.

2. Methodology

Thirty-five qualitative interviews were conducted with French adult women, between 19 and 74 years old, with different socio-economical status. All of the respondents were drawn from two French cities (Paris, Bordeaux and their suburbs). Fifteen of these women were obese (BMI above 30) and twenty were overweight (BMI between 25 and 30). The objective was to have a comparable number in these two categories. The interviewees were thus sampled according to the BMI.

Respondents have been recruited by miscellaneous methods (by putting advertisements on Forums, in stores, at general practitioners or nutritionists or by 'snowball' effect thanks to the respondents themselves). Several announcements were drafted. Some of them mentioned specifically 'over-weight women' or 'with weight problems', whereas others looked for women 'wearing clothes from the size 44/46'. At the end, only slightly, or more (with a BMI above 25), over-weight women were interviewed. The interviewed women gave their oral agreement for interviews to be recorded, transcribed, analysed and used for this current research. They were all anonymized.

These interviews lasted on average one hour and thirty minutes, and were conducted face to face or very exceptionally by telephone or Skype. The method of interviews was therefore chosen to gather data on the respondents' knowledge and their beliefs. The objective of interviews was to allow respondents to use the interview to say what made sense for them and to highlight unexpected elements. The semi-structured interviews were based on several themes, such as food, diets, relationship with the body, relations with others (discriminations for example), daily consequences of over-weight and personal representations of over-weight. The objective was to gather data on coherences and contradictions in the discourses on food, weight, body image and health. Open-ended questions were asked under each theme to make them specify certain points of their story or to launch a new theme. During the interviews, the objective was to follow as much as possible the thread of the conversations of respondents while asking them also to tell the evolution of their weight and of their relationship with food, from childhood to adulthood, in order to identify changes and continuities in their life.

First, the interviews were transcribed and individually coded, then they were compared to each other to gauge similarities and differences. The epistemological position was to focus the analysis on the individuals' words, on their

representations and interpretations of their practices and on their beliefs, more than on their actual practices, which were unverifiable during the interview (Demazière and Dubar, 1997).

The approach (Schurmans, 2006) was initially chosen to understand the sense, which every respondent gives to their behaviour, behaviour which may be influenced by society or be a personal creation. Secondly, the objective was to determine if there are common representations between all respondents and if there are variables, which help explain them. Besides social context and classic sociological variables, a lot of emphasis was put during the analysis on the personal history of respondents as well as on their trajectories of physical weight. The purpose was to understand the influence of society but also the individual story underlying in the meanings of individuals. The objective so was to seize the world of the everyday life of these respondents (Schütz, 1962).

At first some themes coded were analysed to seize the representations of respondents on foodstuffs and the influence of social and medical discourses on overweight and food on these representations. The study of foodstuff representations was then completed with the analysis of the representation of overall food, and food practices. The choice of a restricted number of cases allowed to better seize the complexity of social mechanisms and possible answers of chosen people, by analysing together their life stories, their attitudes and their beliefs. These cases were chosen because their relationship with food and weight were shared by a large number of respondents. The objective was at first to describe the characteristics of these possible types, their differences, then to see if they depended, or not, on sociological variables (such as social class or weight) and finally to observe their common elements, particularly that of the impact of society. This research, being a qualitative one, does not claim authority to establish an objective typology of modern eaters. However, it will attempt to determine a theory or hypotheses based on eaters' profiles, in other words their particular relationships with food and eating, by attempting to highlight the most relevant and redundant characteristics of their life stories. These hypotheses will have to be tested by other means in more controlled way, the purpose here is to develop or generate theory.

3. Findings

The representations of foodstuffs

Among the respondents, three binary categories stand out. While they are not mutually incompatible, one category often dominates at one point in the personal and weight-linked history of respondents. The first extremely strong category in this debate is that of eating for pleasure. Valuing pleasure enables one to unveil the ambivalence between liked and disliked food, culturally authorised or not. In this category, it is the body dictating to the eaters what is liked, it is the senses one listens to, and while tastes might well be culturally moulded, it is the individual who takes the foremost position. Thus, even amongst those valuing pleasure eating, the rule is to abuse nothing 'in order to stay healthy'. The second category tends to separate food according to the 'health' value attributed to it. In this category, it is the medical or pseudo-medical discourse (through the media) which is followed, health-food evolving with the times. The third category finally separates fatty food from the non-fattening kind. If this category may be connected to the second, but it is nonetheless specific by nature of its less rationalized beliefs and through the dependence on media hype and shared feeling. Health appears then to justify a 'moral' stance on food, in which certain foodstuffs are forbidden or restricted through their associated representation.

Table 1: Relationship with foodstuffs

Relationship with foodstuffs:	The eater listens to:
Liked food or not	Her Body
« Health-food » or not	The medical or pseudo-medical discourse
High-calorie food or not	The media and the common sense

These binary categorizations of what we could call « taboo or fetish foodstuffs » show among respondents an ambivalence between pleasures and fears. This is why for respondents the aesthetic and intimate weight issue seems to be the basis and background of their food categories, more important than health for most of them and all the more so as they are already over-weight. The outcome of the way they view their own bodies illustrates the ambivalence between the desire to slim down in order to please themselves,

and the desire to slim down in response to the medical and social injunctions to a 'healthy body'. Their socially and medially 'abnormal' body pushes them even further towards a permanent dwelling on food thoughts, emphasized by the weakening of social rules, which they are, through their own bodies, the symbol of a diet and food behaviour, criticized in social representations. However, if the link with foodstuffs among the respondents seems partially motivated by this fear of over-weight, does that mean that the relationship with food overall is impacted by this weight norm?

The relationship with food: the example of five ethoses

To answer this question, five respondents were taken as 'ethoses' (Corbeau, 2002), in other words as typical eaters' profiles. These ethoses were constructed at the basis of what the respondents said of themselves, and the sense that they give to their link with food. These five typical cases were chosen because they were at the same time very rich in terms of meanings but also representative of the variety of analysed eating habits amongst respondents. The issue here is not only their representation of what it is eaten, but their relationship with food in general and the eaters themselves. Whilst the connections with foodstuffs concerns diet classifications and the beliefs and representations associated with foodstuffs, the relationship with food concerns all the interactions of respondents with their food, whether it will be during the meal preparation or during the meal itself, but also in their daily life and outside specific eating times.

The findings and analysis of the interview data indicate that the issue of 'control' influences their relationship with food. The respondents try to avoid the cognitive dissonance by eating what they want to eat. If there is congruence, between the desire and the achievement, the relationship with food is perceived by the respondents, as something chosen and positive. The case of the three first ethoses is presented in detail below and are summarised in table 2.

Table 2: Chosen relationship with food

Controlled relationship with food	Relationship with foodstuffs	Relationship with weight
(Chloé) Pleasure Eating	Liked food or not	Doesn't' take care of her weight
(Magdelena) Orthodox dieting	« Health-food » or not	Wants to keep her weight
(Cinthia) Weight Loss Diet (temporary)	High-calorie food or not	Wants to lose weight

Chloé, a 21-year-old overweight auxiliary nurse, fits the category of what we can call the ethos of food valuing. Unlike her friends, she does not diet or curb her food intake at all (or barely so) and says, for instance: "*With my mates, we go into town and have tea in a pub or tearoom…not far from us and … we sometimes meet up and there are cakes! Not surprising…and my friend never takes a cake, never ever! It's the devil…*". In this ethos of food valuing, on top of taste pleasure, is valued food conviviality. Chloé considers for instance that enjoying oneself can in addition favour well-being and mental-health. In terms of weight, Chloé, who comes from a family background where there is a marked and generous plumpness in the female line, does not want to lose weight. She even rejects the weight loss diets and permanent curbing as "*unhealthy obsessions*". She returns, therefore, the stigma of bad health among heavy people onto slim ones, who would be the health sufferers as they do "*not enjoy what life has to offer*". The ethos of Chloé is wide-spread among my respondents who comes from the middle or lower class.

In contrast, Magdalena, a former teacher, now 69, and slightly overweight, values health. She represents over-weight people as unhealthy and lacking self-control, by consequent she does everything not to become over-weight. Her behaviour corresponds to what is termed 'orthodox dieting'. She limits all fatty foods, even those she loves (particularly chocolate, which she replaces by sugar) and carefully follows the nutritional specialists' guidelines. Through fear of cholesterol, she has stopped eating cold meats (potted meat, pork and beef cold sausage), which she loved. When she gains a few kilos, she goes on a weight loss diet. Since she followed the dissociated diet from Demis RoussosII, she continues to follow its precepts. She perceives very low calorie eating as a tool (she could be feeding herself through pills.) Treated by homeopathy, she has recently discovered the 'health foods' or 'alicaments' in French, and considers that her food alone (with some plants) must serve her

[II] Demis Roussos's dissociated diet is a diet that advocates specific combinations of foods in order to lose weight (for example not mixing carbohydrate with protein in the same meal).

medicinally. She takes food as a medicine, as many cultures (Asian cultures for example) did or do. For her health, she varies her nutritional intake, has taken soya when it was recommended, tries to avoid convenience foods, and considers herself a vegetarian. Her relationship with eating revolves around constant food controlling. This ethos is that of an educated, middle class woman.

Cinthia, an overweight 21-year-old student, are in temporary control of their eating, following a *weight loss* diet, like 55% of French (Masson, 2003: 28). Cinthia has previously lost 33 kilos, following a very strict *weight loss* diet and doing sport. She has regained some 20 kilos in three years and restarted a diet three months ago with a dietician. Her aim is to lose roughly 15 kilos to feel better with herself, be able to dress easier and be attractive. Health plays no part in her wish to slim down. Unlike other respondents who have already tested mono-foods (soup, grapes, curd, vegetables and suchlike), a mono-family (proteined), or food-free (proteined Sachets), Cinthia thinks that she has a balanced *weight loss* diet, even if it is hypo-calorific (she eats only 1300 calories per day). Her food intake is tightly monitored, and she has *weight loss* diets, which she follows. The language she uses swings back and forth between personal and medical classifications. She is, though, in the symbolic moral of the 'purgative' diet (anti-toxins), but in the area of the moral 'struggle'. She says:" *At first, the diet for me was… it was really a combat like, it really was … I'm here to prove myself…*". This desire to succeed enables Cinthia to follow a very strict *weight loss* diet, allowing her to interpret her body's physiological signals (hunger) as what she has to struggle against. In order to win, Cinthia speaks of her strategies to 'fool her brain' and make it think that it's eating more than it actually is (in cooking plenty) or in switching off food thoughts. She is also trying to learn to like health food, which she still thinks of as a punishment (especially greens). She evokes the importance of keeping control of skidding off her food track. So, rather than making herself feel guilty, Cinthia prefers to choose willingly to transgress her diet with forbidden food, (a plate of pasta, for example) and then to limit the control loss. She prefers, like Magdalena, to avoid certain food at home, where she cannot control her intake quantity (like chocolate). Consuming taboo food (in small or large quantities according to the food link amongst the respondents) engendered as a form of punishment, a greater or lesser feeling of guilt, exacerbated when the food eaten was appreciated for its taste, just as if the 'forbidden fruit' made the female eater even more guilty. Her 'struggle' to dominate her being impossible to apply over more than the short term, she is worried about what will happen in the future, during the stabilization phase.

Unlike Chloé, Magdalena and Cinthia, who choose their diet (and their degree of control), other respondents such as Valentine and Bertille described below evoke the belief that they cannot control most of the time their food intake. Therefore, they rather attempt to control their supply or their agenda.

Table 3: No chosen relationship with food

No controlled relationship with food	Relationship with foodstuffs	Relationship with weight
(Valentine) Nibbling	No control with some food (chocolate for example)	Weight gain (Yo-yo)
(Bertille) Compulsive crises	No control with all food	Weight gain (Yo-yo)

As other respondents of whom she is representative, Valentine, a 39- year-old slightly obese civil servant executive, eating is a difficult act. Her relationship with food is conflictual and this is manifested by behaviours, like nibbling and the inability to control the intake of certain sweet foods. She considers sugar as a kind of drug, bearing 'besides all its characteristics, (dependence, withdrawal symptoms and compulsive attitude).'(Duboys de Labarre, 2002: 83) The issue of 'compensation' (eating to compensate for anxiety, stress or loneliness) is very strong and enables Valentine to attenuate her strong feeling of guilt when she cracks (i.e. the cognitive dissonance is balanced). Like the previous respondents, Valentine's strategy is that if she does not manage to control her eating, she attempts to control her purchases and meal preparations. She plans ahead for her holiday destinations so as not to rely on others for her food intake. She never ceases to think of her weight and diet. Every outing with her children, the merest meal or breakfast organized by her employer, triggers high anxiety in her. I ask: "*Do you think about your food intake often?" She replies: "Yes, daily, always...it's always….I realize that as soon as I relax and start thinking that in fact, holidays, activities, it's always in connection with food"*. Having suffered from an early age of being made fun of because of her weight, and her

frustration with diets (she was put on diets very young), Valentine suffers greatly from not being able to prevent her weight gains. She says, "*Food, yeah, it's both a friend and an enemy… it's an ambivalent relationship and then as soon as I say to myself, 'time to make peace', it's always turns into a lose-lose relationship. What I'd really like is to have a healthy relationship with food for sure.*" Valentine nibbles all the time but it is not only this in itself that she sees as reprehensible given its contents, but that women who enjoy their food are viewed worse than men. For example, expressions such as 'to eat like a pig' in French show how certain eaters are compared with animals when they do not obey their community's nutritional rules. This compulsive ethos can be found in every social circle and at all ages.

But if for Valentine, her inability to control her food intake can be moderated by certain strategies or curbed during high-level emotional times, for other respondents like Bertille, an extremely obese 52 – year- old ghost-writer, it is or generally has been, impossible. As for other respondents, who have had food intake problems very young (Binge Eating Disorder (BED), bulimia, compulsive crises), Bertille has assigned food a quick and efficacious compensatory role to cope with daily family, sentimental and professional tensions over food. What it is socially criticized of these compulsive eaters, it is not only the quantity or the quality of what they consumed, but also the solitary nature of the food intake. If it is tolerated to eat a lot in other's company, as is shown by the image of the 'bon-vivant' in French, it is morally reprehensible not to share mealtimes. This criticism is the same as that made of alcoholics who drink alone. Bertille compares herself with the latter, besides. She says: "*Yeah, yeah… I can't do whatever I like, so….I'm very careful about that, yeah…because the minute when…you know, it's like an alcoholic who's stopped drinking…so it's the same thing…if I…go back to a curbing strategy, I risk retriggering dietary problems, so I can't afford to do that...*" She considers that it is no longer food like chocolate, which is like a drug, but all her relationship with food is addictive. So she is also very careful with her relationship with her food and the frustrations that they can engender, as if she were on a detoxification cure. Her ethos is characteristic of women from the middle or upper class, with higher education.

4. Discussion

Given that the over-weight respondents are constantly subject to demands to lose weight, their over-weight is sociologically relevant to understand the fears that they have (to gain weight, to be ill for example). In a first analysis, we saw that the social discourses on thinness, health and critique of over-weight people influence a binary representation of foodstuffs, between 'good' or 'bad' foodstuffs and increase their food confusion.

To understand if this influence was also present in representations of overall food and in food practices mentioned by respondents, we have analysed five representative typical cases, where different relationships with food were described, marked by different discourses, different beliefs on food, different daily practices (practices of diets, rejection of certain food, etc.) and different objectives (to get slimmer, to feel good, to be healthy, etc.). The chosen approach being qualitative it is not possible to directly link or show direct associations from these cases with particular sociological variables, such as social class or over-weight. The reported and analysed differences between overweight women and obese women were for example not sufficient in this study. Although obesity is more frequent amongst disadvantaged social groups, especially women (Saint Pol, 2007), this research did not encounter consistent differences between the respondents depending on their socio-professional belonging. On the contrary all sociological characteristics such as age, social and cultural origin but also parenting, family relations and female physical history (pregnancy, menopause, etc.) were useful in order to better understand the different representations and the practices of respondents.

While these cases presented various possible relationships with food, the influence of social discourses on thinness and food, in particular of the issue of control in each profile are noteworthy. This tension between self-control and responsibility is hugely significant in today's discourse and can lead to, stigmatizing those who are over-weight. The respondents appear to adhere to this belief with the issue of control emerging in the discourses and practices of respondents. This leads to asking the question of the borderline between the pathological and the normal and where, as a matter of fact, is this borderline? What mean nowadays 'normal' eating habits? Must we, for example, use medical classifications and definitions of illnesses, or must we deem that nothing, from the very outset, is medical, and that everything is social? Though should this be the case, can one analyse it sociologically (and how)?

We can define this normality, and consequently the border of abnormality in several possible

manners: first of all, by taking account of the definitions and practices of respondents. It is noticeable that the respondents' strategy in buying, classifying and controlling their food is so as not to gain weight. If some of them manage as best they can, for better or for worse against the odds, others, in contrast, fail – especially in the case of food compulsions. We can observe for the respondents, according to the way they conceive themselves and give sense to their food behaviour, the border between what is the 'normal' relationship with food, and what becomes problematic, is shaped by this notion of control and not by the Body Mass Index. When this relationship is under control, despite the unease engendered in daily life, it is 'normal'. It becomes problematic when the control is not anymore possible. Chloé thinks that this uncontrolled relationship is the most common: "*But whatever happens, it's an illness…*". I ask: "*What sort?" "Food, it's an illness…(laughter)…the relationship with food is so conflictual in our society that it's an illness…oh yeah….really….there are …illnesses which are more or less serious, as I say, but it's that…an illness.*" (Chloe, 21-year-old overweight midwife).

We could therefore consider that control has become commonplace for a certain number of females, amongst which the majority of respondents, in the form of food control to prevent gaining weight or to become slimmer. It means that this behaviour of control is, for respondents, a way to define what is 'normal' or not.

But a criticism of this definition of normality is that this attempt to control (for example by diets) would lead to a conflictual relationship with food. It should be reminded that '20% to 50% of over-weight individuals consulting General Practitioners in order to lose weight would appear to be subject to food behavioural problems' (Apfeldorfer, 2002). Whether the compulsive crises are the cause or result of their excessive over-weight, they trigger a spiral of failed dieting. The respondents have entered into a weight gain crisis cycle (even greater than previously), which would explain their 'recalcitrant obesity'.

The normality would be not to control the food intake but on the contrary to eat without thinking. This criticism is maintained in particular by psychology and psychiatry and many specialists of food. Being this criticism relevant, must we then accord scientific credit to psychological and psychoanalytical theories or must one only take them as a study item? These psychological and medical theories ask other interesting questions. Should this transition be defined as a difference in degrees, therefore keeping continuity between normality and pathology, or as a natural one (therefore without continuity)? The first case would suggest that we must establish a measurable borderline by defining one or the other; while the second case, seems to say that there is no point in common between conflictual but normal food behaviour and pathological behaviour. The first case is problematic because eating habits cannot be reduced to figures, they are complex and depend on numerous factors, as the five ethoses showed us. The second case is also problematic because these ethoses showed us that there is a continuum of attitudes and values between controlled behaviour ('normal' for respondents) and not controlled behaviour ('pathological' for respondents). Furthermore in the second case, the definition of 'pathological' would depend on medicine and psychiatry. And we cannot forget that this overmedicalization can also have impacts, especially when the label of 'ill' becomes excluding for individuals or acts upon their behaviours with a 'loop effect' (Hacking, 2001).

On the other hand, though, not medicalizing means sometimes denying the suffering of those who feel that they can no longer control their relationship with food. Some among the respondents have also felt more 'normal' in being labelled 'ill' by the medical body, thus discovering that their relationship with food was not unique and could be treated. This definition enabled them also to rid themselves of guilt feelings and reduce the anxiety caused by the loss of control. But if certain respondents prefer these medical definitions of normality and pathological, they are nevertheless taken with caution, for example with the definition of Binge Eating Disorder by Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM IV), which raises the question of the transition from the normal to the 'pathological'. Food disorders could be furthermore classified in some thirty subcategories (Le Barzic, 1998). This overmedicalization of individual behaviours is thus problematic because it leads to create illnesses (Illich, 1975) and to make of 'normality' an exception.

Sociologically, food behaviour disorders have been defined as 'sociopathies' (Poulain, 2002), meaning disorders whose causes lie in the social changes in food patterns, the new food fears, as well as the body slimming norm. Consequently, the contribution of the sociology could be threefold, questioning on one hand the definitions about this subject found in various disciplines (in particular medicine, psychology and dietetics), then

determining the common aspects and existing differences between behaviour of individuals supposed to be 'normal' or 'abnormal' and finally determining what could be 'normality' in our society, for instance by researching about what cause problems for individuals in their everyday life. These three aspects would allow analysing food behaviour and 'normality' by taking account of their complexity and the fact that the food act is a 'bio-psycho-anthroplogical act' (Morin, 2005). The ability to eat 'in a innocent way' was destroyed by the confusion of nutritional rules, a social environment urging to consume and a physical ideal of thinness for women. All these elements raise eating disorders and overweight and obesity. Therefore sociology has to continue to analyse these phenomena, as much as psychology or medicine.

Finally, the interest of this work was to show on the one hand that the relationships with food of over-weight women are often problematic because of the influence of media and medical discourses on the representation of food and of over-weight body. On the other hand, this study has showed the challenge of defining a 'normal' relationship with food and the current importance of the issue of 'control', connected to social representations of health, performance or responsibility. It would be interesting afterward to compare these results with other people, like over-weight men or over-weight women in other countries, in order to see if the relationship with food is also conflictual among them.

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Pleasures and stress of eating alone and eating together among French and German young adults

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Abstract

The presence and the absence of people during meals create pleasures and stress to the eaters. Therefore these positive or negative feelings have an impact on their perception and their appreciation of meals.
The purpose of this paper is to explore the pleasures and the stress of eating alone and eating together among French and German young adults. We focused on this specific age group and on the cultural differences observed between France and Germany.
Negative feelings of eating alone are predominantly known in current literature. Nonetheless, solo eating events also allow positive feelings. Eating with others encourages several activities and situations, which are commonly recognized as sources of pleasure, building the conditions for sociability. However, sharing meals is also stressful for the eaters. These negative feelings may encourage young adults to choose to eat alone from time to time or an adjustment of commensal eating events. Additionally, differences between the French and German young adults have been observed, which could be explained by the attitudes towards food and the eating patterns in these two countries.
These aspects are discussed in the paper thanks to empirical data collected through in-depth interviews with forty-five French and German young adults and participant observations of eating events in Lyon, Paris and Berlin.

Keywords: eating together, eating alone, pleasure, stress, ethnography, cross-cultural.

1. Introduction

During the last decades in western countries, people need to eat alone because of working schedules, distance between workplace and home, living conditions or business travels. In addition, the contemporary food market (a large choice of convenient food offer by catering industry) allows and facilitates the possibility of people eating when-, where- and whatever they want. Today, urban and middle-class people can find in their proximity something to eat at any time of the day and in mostly every place in a city. These phenomena seem to encourage solo eating events in contemporary society and at the same time, the possibility to eat together without eating the same meal content. It is conceivable to suggest that solo eaters[I] and the evolution of the social dimension of eating are important issues for the researchers in social and nutritional sciences and as well as for the professionals of the catering industry.

The act of eating is a paradox. On one hand, eating is an individual act. Every person needs to feed her/his body and eating is a personal matter. On the other hand, the meal seems to constitute the very foundation of social life and is regulated by cultural norms prescribing that and how we eat together (Simmel, 1997). Eating behaviours are structured following sociocultural patterns, which define what, where, when, with whom and how the food should be eaten in a specific group and according to the occasion (Douglas and Nicod, 1974). Commensality, which means eating with others (Sobal and Nelson, 2002), is a central concept in understanding the activity of eating as a social occasion, allowing the integration and the socialization of an individual into a group with its values, representations, norms and structure. Moreover, the evolution during the last decades in the relationship between human beings and food suggests that commensality is a crucial issue for understanding contemporary eating practices in western countries.

Today, several questions should be raised in order to understand commensality: what does eating together involve? What are the differences between shared or solo eating events? Why do people choose to eat together or alone? How do people eat alone and with other people? What consequences have the presence and the absence of people during meals on food consumption? Only few studies investigating these topics exist in current literature. The presence and the absence of people during meals create pleasures and stress to the eaters. Therefore these positive or negative feelings have an impact on the perception and the appreciation of meals.

Negative feelings of eating alone are predominantly known in literature. Nonetheless, the assertions that solo eating events engender also positive feelings and that feelings provoked by the presence or the absence of people during eating events are the result of cultural constructions could not be excluded. Eating with others encourages several activities and situations, which are commonly recognized as sources of pleasure, building the conditions for sociability. However, sharing meals is also stressful. For every social interaction, there are norms, social representations and usages guiding the actions of the participants of the activity and these are culturally defined. Individuals are expected to recognize the situation and to behave in conformity with the conventions. Negative feelings of sociality may encourage individuals to choose eating alone from time to time or an adjustment of commensal eating events to specific lifestyles and societies.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the pleasures and the stress of eating alone and eating together among French and German young adults. The word “pleasure” refers here to positive feelings allowing people to appreciate the social environment of the meal. On the other hand, the word “stress” means here the negative feelings inducing people to dislike it. The research focuses on this specific age group because young adults are reputed to become independent, they have particular living conditions (e.g. small rooms in halls of residence, in shared flat, etc.) and most of them are free of obligations of daily meals with their family. During this life stage, they are particularly concerned by solo eating practices, but also by eating sociability, which means eating with people not living in the same household (Larmet, 2002). So, young adults are an interesting age group to study in order to investigate experiences of solo eating events. At the same time, the company of peers and the importance of friendship and leisure activities in their everyday life admit the existence of sociable occasions around food. This lets us to collect positive and negative experiences of shared meals with peers. Moreover, some young adults still live with their families and the others have just moved outside the family home. Therefore, they would probably go there from time to time or even eat with their family. These aspects give the opportunity to collect experiences including positive and negative feelings of eating with family and with peers.

The phenomena have been investigated in young adults living in two European countries: France and

[I] Eaters: Fischler (1979) has centred the attention to the eater, formulating in this way the issue of the human eater. He emphasizes that humans incorporate the food consumptions, and these become the eater himself (Poulain, 2002c: 174).

Germany. Comparing stories and observing solo and collective eating events of French and German young adults might allow the identification of elements revealing cultural differences in pleasures and stress provoked by solo or commensal eating events and as well as differences in the attitude towards food between French and German people. The choice to investigate these two countries is based on the results of the cross-cultural survey *Manger* (2008) directed by Claude Fischler and Estelle Masson. The researchers involved in this survey noticed two opposed conceptions of food in the six investigated countries. One of them is a predominantly individual conception of eating, centred on the personal responsibility and the possibility of choice. This attitude is more diffused in the United States, in the United Kingdom and in Germany. In the other conception, eating was perceived as a social act, where the notions of sharing and shared pleasure are central. This attitude is characteristic of France, Italy and the French speaking area of Switzerland. The different conception of eating and sharing food in France and in Germany highlighted in this survey could be symptomatic of the pleasures and the stress of eating alone and eating together in French and German young adults.

In this paper, the pleasures and the stress of eating alone and eating together among young adults and possible cultural differences surrounding them are explored thanks to empirical data composed of forty-five in-depth interviews with French and German young adults and participant observations of eating events in Lyon, Paris and Berlin. The first part of the article introduces the literature surrounding the topic discussed in the paper. The second part presents the design of the study. Then, the empirical data is exposed and discussed. This section is divided into three parts with the aim of showing separately the pleasures and the stress of eating alone, the pleasures and stress of eating together and the cultural differences between the French and German populations identified in this study. In the conclusions, the impact of these positive and negative feelings on the appreciation of meals and their influence on the choice of eating alone or together and on contemporary forms of commensality are discussed.

2. Theoretical framework

Several researchers in social sciences have studied the social dimension of eating and underlined the central role of the sharing and the offering of food in the social organisation and the forging of societies (e.g. Durkheim, 1912; Mauss, 1950; Richards, 1932; Robertson-Smith, 1889; Schmitt Pantel, 1992; Simmel, 1997). Anthropological works paid special attention to the meanings and functions of commensality in human societies. These works highlighted that commensality allows communal solidarity, socialization and sociability. Therefore, eating with others allows the maintenance and the establishment of social relations and the social integration of the commensals into a group (Counihan, 2004; Mäkelä, 2000; Julier, 2002; Sobal, 2000). Mealtime is a cultural site for the socialisation of people into members of a society and builds social roles (Appadurai, 1981; Charles and Kerr, 1988; DeVault, 1994; Mars, 1997; Ochs and Shohet, 2006).

During the last decades, researchers in social sciences underlined the emergence of behaviour of "vagabond feeding" in developed countries in opposition to commensality (Fischler, 1979). These forms of behaviours seem to lead the increase and the "destructuration" of food consumption through the practice of grazing and snacking (Fischler, 1979 and 1990; Herpin, 1988; Levenstein, 1988; Rotenberg, 1981; Poulain, 2002a and 2002b). The observation of these trends stimulated the proliferation of studies interested in the social dimension of eating in several fields.

However, some sociologists claim that the evolution of commensality in western countries is not homogenised, because these phenomena do not have the same impact on all socio-demographic profiles and countries (Grignon, 1993). In effect, it is difficult to deny a trend of standardisation, homogenization and individualisation of eating patterns. And at the same tie, the inexistence of influences of cultural heritages on eating patterns cannot be affirmed. There is not enough data to generalize these assertions. Moreover, recent cross-cultural studies showed that attitudes towards food differ from one country to another inducing different behaviour regarding the social dimension of eating (Rozin et al., 1999; Fischler et Masson (Eds.), 2008) and that the evolution of mealtimes and time spent eating do not follow the same rhythms in western countries (De Saint Pol, 2005; Kjaernes (Ed.), 2001; Warde et al., 2007). This data suggests that the importance given to the social dimension of eating evolves over the time and differs between societies.

Some studies suggested that commensality, under specific conditions, might play a beneficial role on health. For example, some researchers underlined the preventive effects of the family meal on obesity and on the consumption of drugs and alcohol (Berlin, 2001; Fitzpatrick et al., 2007; Neumark-Sztainer et al., 2003).

Researchers in the field of experimental psychology observed that the presence of people during eating events influences the quantity of food consumed and the time spent at the table

(Bell and Pliner, 2003; De Castro et al., 1990; De Castro and Brewer, 1992; Herman et al., 2003). Other factors identified as having an impact on the quantity of food consumed when an individual eats in the presence of others are: the relationship he/she has with the commensals - the more familiar are the commensals, the more quantity of food people eat- (Salvy et al., 2007), the body size of the eater (Salvy et al., 2008) and the quantity of food consumed by the companions (Pliner and Bell, 2009).

Researches also revealed that people generally prefer eating with other people to eating alone (Pliner and Bell, 2009). This might be one of the reasons why people spend more time eating in company of other people than alone, as the study of 2006 of Patricia Pliner and her colleagues showed. An explanation of the preference of commensal eating events is that mealtimes are occasions of sociability as many studies emphasized (Counihan, 2004; DeVault, 1992; Julier, 2002; Warde and Martens, 2000). Culturally, people are expected to eat with people and the solitary eater in many cultures engenders suspicion. People may ask why should individuals prefer to deprive themselves of sharing a meal? Why should a person eat alone? Does this person not have friends or family? Today, more and more people have living arrangements and working conditions that force them to eat some meals alone (e.g. Torres et al., 1992). However, the occurrence of solo eating events does not seem to be only a consequence of logistic factors. The existence of people eating alone might be also connected to ideological, medical, aesthetical and religious reasons. For example, in work or school canteens people sometimes could not eat because the offer does not take into account their different diets. In this way, they are excluded or preclude themselves from commensal interactions with colleagues. Sometimes people want to choose whatever and whenever to eat independently of the social environment.

On one hand, a decrease of normative pressures surrounding eating behaviours owing to the social changes in the last forty years cannot be denied (Fischler, 1979; Levenstein, 1988; McIntosh, 1999; Mestdag, 2005; Murcott, 1997). This trend leads to an individualisation of eating practices and maybe a change of the pleasures and stress of eating alone. People have the possibility or the obligation to feed themselves outside their "commensal circle" (Sobal and Nelson, 2003). Therefore, they socialize into a different group environment (such as colleagues or friends) from the other members of their family or in multiple groups with specific codes and values (such as young adults, who eat in company of peers and as well as of family). On the other hand, it is not possible to exclude the emergence of new forms of sharing food and table rituals owing to the emergence of new forms of sociability in contemporary society, new leisure practices and the evolution of the catering industry's offer as recent studies pointed out (Corbeau and Poulain, 2002; Julier, 2002; Warde and Martens, 2000).

3. Methodological framework

This research used an ethnographic and cross-cultural approach. The choice of a qualitative methodology is based on the possibility of describing eating practices and social representations surrounding the meanings and the feelings of solo and commensal eating events. The choice of an international comparison is connected to the aim of exploring if the positive and negative feelings of eating alone and eating together were related with specific cultural patterns, as the survey edited by Fischler and Masson (2008) suggested. Differences regarding these aspects could highlight cultural differences around attitudes towards food and eating patterns in France and Germany.

The fieldwork took place in 2009 and 2010 in Lyon, Paris and Berlin. Data was collected using in-depth interviews and participant observations. Forty-five interviews were conducted with young adults in France and Germany, twenty-two in France and twenty-three in Germany. The social profiles of the interviewed young adults were heterogeneous: aged from 18 to 28 years old; 24 girls and 21 boys; 16 salaried and 29 students; 21 living in shared flat, 9 living alone, 8 living with their partner and 7 with family. The interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and two hours and have been totally transcribed. In France, snowball recruitment was used, which means that the recruitment started through the social networks of the researcher and the person met for the interview gave her other contacts and so on. In Berlin, in addition to the snowball recruitment, some posters were hung in the universities and people encountered in parks and in universities were solicited to participate in an interview. This additional way of recruiting participants is related to the importance of differentiating the sample and it was not possible to do it with the limited social network of the researcher in Germany. Interviews with people who were asked to participate were not done at the moment of the recruitment. An appointment was fixed in order to take the time to discuss as well as for the people recruited thanks to snowball recruitment.

The choice to diversify the sample was important for several reasons. First from an anthropological insight, it is crucial to meet and discuss with

various profiles of people in order to understand what is specific to a culture and not only to a particular social group. It is also possible to reveal specificities by comparing homogeneous samples in the two countries, as other researchers have chosen for their international comparison (e.g. Pfirsch, 1997). Nevertheless, in the case that there are several similarities between the two samples, how is it possible to affirm that they are linked to the inexistence of cultural differences and do not depend on the similar lifestyle of specific social groups? Moreover, a comparative study helped us to understand if national eating practices and culture are replaced by a global culture or if globalization is integrated in a different way into existing national traditions (Bildtgård, 2010; Sanchez, 2007; Traphagan and Brown, 2002), and also if the food has a central role in the national identity in different countries or if it is a matter of class distinction (Shields-Argelès, 2008).

In this paper, the variety of the encountered people is relevant because illustrates that several profiles of people have to eat alone in everyday life and for different reasons linked to social conditions (e.g. living alone, working with older people, not rigid schedule, etc.) and all these people are also prone to the constraints of social or unsociable aspects of eating events. In addition, the variety of profiles helps first of all to have an overview of the feelings of eating alone and eating together, and then to notice if some groups are more exposed to stress or pleasures of eating alone and eating together. Differences in social practices are also meaningful of specific cultures and so these practices are the culture itself. This allows us to underline how these feelings are cultural constructions.

The interviews were conducted in French in France and in English in Germany. In Germany, the researcher did not feel enough confortable with German in order to conduct in-depth interviews. In addition, she preferred interviewing people alone than in the presence of one interpret. However, the researcher told to German young adults that she could ask one interpret to join them if they did not feel enough confortable with English. Finally, they were all agrees to participate at the interview in English. Despite this, most of the informants used German words and expressions sometimes. This was the case when they did not know the right translation in English and when it was important for them to keep the German version in order to express themselves precisely.

People during interviews were asked to speak about the role of food in their life, their everyday and festive eating habits, the differences observed in their eating habits over a period of time or according to social situations (e.g. leaving family home, starting to work, etc.), their impressions of local eating practices and their experience in the case of a long period abroad, their ideal meal and the practice of eating alone and with people. Pleasures and stress related to the presence and the absence of people during eating events appeared repeatedly during the interviews.

The researcher observed young adults in several eating events with the aim of identifying what, where, with whom and how young adults eat. The immersion in the eating practices of young adults helps her to identify the reasons of stress related to the practice of eating together and also the positive aspects, which allow young adults to build sociability. Young adults sometimes spoke about positive elements of meals or argued about several aspects directly or indirectly related to the food sharing during the organisation of meals, at the table or during other leisure activities with friends (e.g. who will do this or that task, why they did not like that place or that dinner, etc.).

So, by spending time with informants not only during interviews, it was possible to collect information concerning the pleasure and stress of eating alone or together. Observations helped the researcher to discover aspects that were not necessarily verbalized during interviews, to detect possible questions for the interviews and to a better interpretation of the discourses of the informants.

4. Results and Discussion

▪ 4.1. Stress and pleasures of eating alone

One main aspect that young adults expressed concerning negative feelings of eating alone is the fear of the judgement that other people could have about them when they are eating alone in a public place. For example, an informant said that he did not go eating alone to the university restaurant because he does not want to be judged as a person "*without friends*"[II] (French young man, 21 years old). Another example is when the interviewer asked a girl if she sometimes went to the university canteen when she is alone, and she answered:

Informant: "No, never, never, I've never gone on my own (she laughs)!"

Interviewer: "I've seen a lot of people eating alone in the Mensa (university canteen)…"

Informant: "I know, I know, but I'm not like that at all, I choose to not go to the Mensa if I have to go on my own" (German young woman, 19 years old).

[II] All the extracts of the interviews with French young people cited in the article have been translated into English by the author.

Many informants in this study also said they felt pity and sadness for people eating alone in canteens or restaurants. Some of them never had tried this kind of experience and they would not really try it. For example, an informant told:
"I do not really like eating alone (she smiles). I always had an image of people… You know, these people that eat alone at the restaurant at lunch, they are too sad!" (French young woman, 24 years old).

This kind of experience was perceived as a kind of test. For example, an informant speaking about the first times she went to the canteen alone, said:
"Yes, it's special (she laughs), I threw myself into this adventure, too bad, I did not have enough time to go to my flat, but it's true that you feel, it's strange, because all the people eat together, you arrive, you have a place alone and then, even the people… If you meet some friends when you are leaving, they say to you 'Ah! But have you eaten alone? It's sad!'"(French young woman, 22 years old).

So, negative feelings of solo eating impose the choice of specific contexts and eating manners, in which the solo eater is not prone to be judged by other people. It seems that there are places and ways of eating which are more adapted for solo eating events. For example, some informants said they preferred eating a sandwich or fast food while engaging in other activities or going to eat at home when they are alone.
"I prefer almost going… if I am alone, I go buy my sandwich and I go shopping or something, but I never eat at the university canteen alone!" (French young woman, 24 years old).

Stories of the informants illustrate that when they eat alone, they perceive they are eating in a worse way, such as uncooked food, without conventional table manners, faster, etc. They eat food, which is not cooked or convenience food, as this informant said: "*When I was living alone, I ate many pre-prepared dishes and sandwiches*" (French young woman, 23 years old).

In effect, informants underlined that they are not used to cooking just for themselves, because they do not have the motivation. For example, informants said: "*It is true that meals alone, I do not like them too much, I need to find the motivation to cook*" (French young man, 23 years old) or *"That was one of the things that I hated the most when I was living on my own: just cooking for myself and then sitting there"* (German young woman, 26 years old).

Other people highlighted the bad and unpleasant way of eating when they are alone, which can be seen in their representations: standing, picking up food, and fast.
"*When there is no one, I think that I can eat standing up and pass by the dish many times, and take what is there*" (French young man, 24 years old).

"*If I am together with other people, sure it takes more time, if I am alone, it's very fast, I cook and I eat in 10 minutes*" (German young man, 22 years old).

"I eat quickly at home. Or you are at restaurants with friends and you discuss, but when you are alone at home, the meal it's really quick, in half an hour its is done" (French young man, 22 years old).

The negative feelings of eating alone emerged in this study are intensely linked to the imagination of solitary eaters in the specific culture of the informants. As Pliner and Bell highlighted (2009:184-185), commensal eating is deeply embedded in cultural consciousness and eating alone is an anomalous behaviour. In writers' and philosophers' texts, Bell and Pliner (2009: 174) identified that eating alone is not a good thing for three reasons: it is uncivilized, unpleasant and pathetic. A solo diner is more likely to arouse curiosity or even pity, more likely to feel conspicuous (Bruni 2006 in Jonsonn and Pipping Ekström, 2009: 244). There are a large number of solitary customers for whom lone dining is not as easy as they would like it to be (Jonsonn and Pipping Ekström, 2009).
Moreover, the negative feelings provoked by solo eating show how this situation is undesirable. The lack of motivation of having a "proper" meal and cooking when people are alone observed in this study is related to results of other researches, which revealed that eating alone is associated with poor nutrition (e.g. Davis et al., 1990 and Bell and Marshall, 2003 in Pliner and Bell, 2009: 184).
Nonetheless, eating alone does not create only negative feelings to the eaters. Informants also talked about some pleasures that they can have when they eat alone. The same individual might feel positive or negative feelings by eating alone or together depending in the context, her/his mood, etc. Several people underlined the possibility of being more relaxed when they eat alone and having a moment just for themselves. For example, informants said: "*If I'm really hungry and it has been a stressful day, I like sitting down, quietly, eating my food and not talking to anyone*" (German young man, 23 years old) or "*Sometimes it makes you feel good to eat alone, you do not want to discuss, you do not want to see anyone,*

you just want to be quiet" (French young man, 22 years old).

Other people highlighted the opportunity to pay more attention to food than to conversation while eating alone. One main aspect of the pleasure of solo eating events was related to the possibility of having freedom of food choice and rhythms. This aspect was not directly expressed, but several recurring elements led to believe that freedom is a key point for understanding intentional solo eating events. For example, informants exteriorised their obligation of daily adaptations in order to eat with their partner or flatmates and the pleasure they feel when they can eat without compromises about what food to eat, when and how to eat it with their commensal. Several young adults emphasized the necessity to adapt the food preferences and special diets of everyone in order to eat together. For example, when the interviewer asked an informant if she ate with her girlfriends, she said:

Informant: "It's rare that we eat on our own."

Interviewer: "And do you eat the same things all the time?"

Informant: "No, we do not eat the same things all the time, but it's true that she… How to explain this? The simple things, always the same, it does not disturb her, it's not mean, but it's true, while me, I like changing" (French young woman, 23 years old).

Another informant highlighted the obligation to eat in places that you would not if you are eating alone:

"I do not like eating alone. Nevertheless when eating in group, there is a constraint, which is for example, some people like to go, I don't know… To that sandwich place that I don't like at all. Yes, I go because it is a meal in a group, it's funny, but it's true that when you eat alone, you can also do what you like" (French young man, 20 years old).

The budget and the amount of time that people would like to assign to food was also one element inducing young adults to prefer eating alone to eating with flatmates or with colleagues that do not give the same importance to food. For example, one informant talked about the problem, which cropped up in his flat share:

"We had to organize food in a different way to what we imagined, because P. is a bit… He eats… Because there is P. who eats like a horse, he does not take time to prepare the food well, he tries to eat balanced, but, yes, he does not have the same expectations, it's not… Food has less importance in his life and I think, it's especially a question of money, we tried for 3 or 4 months and he thought that it was too expensive to eat with us, so he decided to do it alone" (French young man, 25 years old).

In addition, young adults seem to appreciate the possibility of eating when they are hungry so they do not have to wait always for conventional mealtimes or for their work-, school-, flat mates to be hungry. For example, several informants highlighted the different time schedules of their flatmates, which do not allow to them to share meals, even if they would like to do it.

Apparently, when people eat alone, they do not have to compromise between their individual desires, the desires of their companions or social conventions. They have the opportunity to eat whatever and whenever they want. Therefore, pleasures of eating alone reveal that there are negative aspects of sociality. Eating with others forces people to be involved in a conversation or to make negotiations and adaptations. From time to time, eating alone is a source of pleasure allowing the satisfaction of individual needs and personal desires. Hypothetically, these points are symptomatic of this life stage, when people become free of several obligations concerning meals with the family. So, they do not have the desire to get involved in the same daily, restrictive and authoritarian social relationships, such as these informants underlined:

"It's when I'm really hungry and I'm in a bad mood if I do not eat (he laughs), and there is no one… Sometimes it could be as well a pleasure to eat alone, because I do not have too much of a fixed schedule, I try not to come home every day at the same hour and to have a rhythm. I try to not have this, because it is a symbol of routine. When I was younger, until… I don't know… 13 years old, I had established hours for meals, because my parents eat, yes the summer it was a bit more relaxed, but…" (French young man, 25 years old).

"The second WG (flat share) was a problem, because he (her flatmate) really wanted to eat together and he was always cooking for us and he was really nice and gentle. But for him it was also important that we ate with him and for me it was like at home with my mom: "I make food and you have to eat it!" and we had a long argument about that and then, this combination was like that again like this and for me it was problematic, because "I need to have my own time when I eat, I like eating with you, but when I do not want to, you can't get angry about that!" (German young woman, 26 years old).

In addition, it is possible to assume that young adults in their relationships with peers are faced with a large variety of food habits and practices, because for example people living together in a

shared flat may not come from the same sociocultural environment. They may come from different regions or countries or they may have different religions, etc. It is not easy to arrange everyone to find a common mealtime and meal content, when they have different cultural patterns or when they may not perceive the people with whom they live as a community and they do not want to build the feeling of community through eating together.

- **4.2. Pleasures andstress of eating together**

Eating together with peers is a source of pleasure among young adults. The word that mostly occurs when people speak about pleasant occasions, in which they join people to eat, is conviviality for French people and several adjectives for German people, such as funny. In these two citations is possible to read the use of the term conviviality: "*It is important for me that there are moments of conviviality*" (French young woman, 25 years old) or "*We had a convivial meal*" (French young woman, 23 years old).
So, convivial is the most specific word to describe pleasant meals. This is especially true for the French informants, because the word in French is currently used. But what does conviviality mean? Trying to distinguish in the interviews what were the elements characterising convivial meals among young adults, it was possible to identify several aspects. Eating with others is mostly interacting with them. Social interactions allow people to spend a pleasant time together. Communication is certainly an important element of convivial meals.
These interactions are constituted mostly of verbal communication, as it is possible to read in these citations:
"We sit there or in the kitchen and we talk, we take our time to eat, to…Yes, to discuss, to talk about the day, it's a time of relaxation" (French young man, 25 years old).

"We stay at the table maybe 2 hours and then, even if we have finished eating, we all stay there discussing, yes. The aim of a meal…It's really a place where you gather everyone, everyone is around, you really make a circle and then we discuss, we take the time" (French young woman, 23 years old).

However, eating and discussing are not the only activities that young adults do when they meet friends for a meal. It is also possible to laugh and do other communal activities, such as playing table games or watching a film before, during or after the meal.

"I like inviting friends at home because I can cook, and this allows us to spend more time all together and there is the possibility to do other things, to play games, to listen to music" (French young woman, 23 years old).

"I like it when we are watching a movie or doing… Like playing a game, or something like that when we are eating" (German young woman, 20 years old).

"*With friends the food is less important, but the conviviality is more important*" (French young woman, 23 years old). This citation highlights that food is not the most important aspect in order to create an ambiance allowing the appreciation of the meal. A failed eating occasion with friends seems to be more connected to the lack of ambiance than to bad food. Even if nice food helps to create a good environment, bad food does not mean that people do not share a convivial occasion. This is especially true in the case of invitations of friends for meals at home, when young adults do not really expect that the food is superb.
Young adults have pleasures when they eat with other people for several other reasons. First, when people eat together, they spend more time eating and this is perceived in a positive way, and on the contrary they perceive eating fast as a bad way of eating.
"*In France we like to spend time eating and when there are friends it is funnier*" (French young woman, 25 years old).

Eating together is also an occasion to discover new dishes. Young adults may discover new food because they go to a place suggested by other people. They go to restaurants and they can try food from their friends' dishes or they order several dishes to share with them in order to taste different things. When they go to eat in someone's home, the host might prepare some food that the guest is not used to eating and so, it is an occasion for discovering new tastes and recipes.
"If they invite me, it does not disturb me to go to a place where I do not usually go, on the contrary this introduces me to new things" (French young woman, 23 years old).

"Everyone cooks once, something typical" (German young man, 22 years old).

"If I go to a restaurant, well…as Italian, but also whatever people suggest to me, I like to try new things, new food" (German young woman, 27 years old).

Another aspect is that young adults prefer cooking for or with other people than just for themselves. For example, informants said: "*I like cooking for friends, because I like to give them pleasure*" (French young woman, 23 years old), "*It is a special kind of cooking, it is a kind of being together. It is not only the task or the activity of cooking, but it is also talking about the day and listening to music while cooking*" (German young man, 27 years old) or "*I like, if we are at home, I really like when we cook together and also I like chopping the stuff together*" (German young man, 24 years old).

The sociologist Mäkelä highlighted that the sociability of shared meals could lie also in the preparation and not only in the consumption. "Preparing meals is an essential part of the social organisation and the sociability of meals. (…) The preparation of meals from scratch gets new meanings. (…) Preparing food can be a joint event where hosts and guests cook together (…). The shared event of meal preparation extends the sociability of eating together to cooking together." (Mäkelä, 2009: 44).

As literature underlined, people prefer to eat in the presence of other people and mealtimes are occasions of sociability. Eating with others should be a sociable occasion. However, during interviews people speak also about stress that eating with other people generates. These feelings are strongly related to the pleasures they can feel when eating alone (that were outlined here previously), such as the obligation to communicate and the obligation to adapt their own desires to the desires of the other commensals.

Young adults do not feel judged only when they eat alone in places where people can see them, but they feel judged as well by their companions. This fear is especially present in people following a special diet or who do not eat a large variety of food. For example, an informant told me about the problems that she has with her girlfriend:

"*I am a bit complicated with food, so for her this could make problems. Because I do not eat fish, and things like that, I do not like it too much. So, from time to time, she said that I am a bit complicated, because she likes almost everything*" (French young woman, 25 years old).

When young adults are invited to a friend's home for dinner or when they invite friends for a meal, they could be stressed. The host may be scared to the point of failing the dish.

"*The only thing that I like when I am cooking alone is basically that I can cook whatever I want, because if I cook for myself something that tastes terrible, I'm not judged, I can see by myself that it is not good*" (German young man, 19 years old).

When young adults are guests, they may feel stressed if they do not like the food offered to them. On one hand, they do not want to offend the host who made an effort to prepare a meal and took care that everyone would enjoy it. On the other hand, they feel bad about eating what they do not like. As the person caring to feed the individuals of his household, the host should care for the food preferences of the guests. Other works interested in the activity of feeding family or guests highlighted that part of this work potentially consists of giving this kind of individual attention (DeVault, 1994), in order to make guests comfortable and in this way creating the opportunity for a sociable occasion (Julier, 2002). In return, the guest is expected to appreciate and to compliment the host.

Another aspect that may provoke negative feelings is the obligation to find topics of discussion in order to avoid silence, but at the same time they have to interest everyone at the table. Long moments of silence and some kind of topics of conversation during meals provoke embarrassment or boredom.

"My friends at the university, but they were not really intimate friends, they were university colleagues. So, the meals were really go and eat and they were not, not really to discuss" (French young woman, 21 years old).

"In the second WG (flat share) it was like they are talking about some political stuff and blah, blah, blah, blah, I'm not so interested, like I'm interested in politics, but when I feel like you talk about it because you have to talk about it, I think, I'm bored (she laughs), but now I enjoy the time with my present flat mates, I enjoy the discussion, the kind of conversation" (German young woman, 25 years old).

"What I like is when we can discuss, when you stay a long time at the restaurant, it's nice when you can discuss with people, you have fun, you laugh. If you cannot really talk, you get bored in a while" (French young man, 22 years old).

Finally, rigid norms and formal manners are also a source of stress for young adults. In order to feel confortable and relaxed during eating occasions, young adults prefer a low degree of formality and a high degree of intimacy. They are afraid of formal manners regulating the interactions between the commensal people and allowing rules and roles to be clearly defined.

Stressful situations underlined by the informants are heightened for those in which they have to eat with unknown people or with people having a superior social position. Some informants have defined eating as an intimate act. One of them for

example said: "*Eating is like showing yourself naked*" (French young woman, 24 years old). This is probably why it is strongly related to the judgement that other people would have about them. The intimacy already existing between commensals allows people to not feel judged and uncomfortable, but it also allows them to express negative feelings. As Julier said: "Comfort becomes the staging for greater intimacy among people" and it "implies a degree of intimacy that usually needs to be negotiated" (Julier, 2002: 47 and 51). Prescript behaviours could be perceived as appropriate or oppressive according to the degree of intimacy between commensal people (Julier, 2002: 51).

- **4.3. Cultural differences in pleasures and stress related to the social dimension of eating**

Even if several similarities between the two populations investigated have been observed, eating alone or eating with others are not liked or disliked always for the same reasons among French and German young adults. This part of the article will show some of the differences noticed in the two countries.

Eating alone was perceived mostly as a source of stress among the French population. They feared that people could have a wrong impression about them if they were eating alone. Even if it could be difficult to find an arrangement in order to eat together and to eat the same meal content, several of the French young adults try to match their schedule with the schedule of their flatmates or their colleagues and also to make an agreement to share the meal. This involves an adaptation between individual desires and social constraints, which consists of having more rigid mealtimes and making compromises on what is eaten. For example, in a citation showed before, a French young adult was disappointed that finally after having tried for few months, it was impossible to find an arrangement to eat together with his flatmates. Another example comes from the informant who claimed that when he is eating in a group, if he cannot choose where and what to eat, it does not matter, because he knows that it will be funnier to do it with others than alone.

The meal is a crucial time to gather people together in France and eating is considered a central activity, where sociability is built.

"The meal is a bit like the only time when people can discuss and now it does not exist too much, because people eat how they want, when they want, what they want" (French young woman, 25 years old).

"It's not really going out with friends, it's more like having a tiny intimate evenings and eating together, it's certain that this allows us to spend a nice evening, because if we meet each other only to spend the evening it's a bit monotonous. Here we know that we can eat, I like that, I know that if I have friends, I like cooking for them, preparing some dishes for them, that gives me pleasure" (French young woman, 21 years old).

Moreover, in the French population, it was possible to notice that young adults need to make a big effort in order to motivate themselves for cooking a meal that will be consumed alone. Eating alone was perceived as the worst kind of eating, such as eating quicker, uncooked food or eating while doing other activities. It is as if eating without people was not really eating or having a meal, but it is more like feeding the body. In a study conducted in United States, the ability to engage in other activities was a positive aspect of solo eating (Pliner and Bell, 2009: 174). On the contrary, in France doing other things while eating, with the exception of conversation, is perceived as a negative aspect. In addition, in France cooking is an activity that people perceive as something that you do for other people and not only for yourself. Prepared food should be shared. The "proper" meal is a social occasion.

On the contrary, many of the German informants do not have a problem with cooking just for themselves. Some German informants said that they are more stressed when they have to cook alone for several people without anybody's help than when they have to cook just for themselves. For example, German young adults said: *"I also cook something for myself sometimes that takes a lot of time, for example Gulash or Rulladen"* (German young man, 19 years old).

Several German young adults declared they enjoyed cooking together more than cooking alone. The pleasure of eating together seems to be related to the enjoyment of sharing an activity with other people. Eating does not seem to be a crucial leisure activity as in France. However, between German young adults there are several other activities, which are done in order to get in touch with people. Cooking was one of these activities. *"I like it if you don't know the people so well that you are living with, cooking is also a good way to get to know each other, to communicate"* (German young woman, 25 years old).

They enjoy sharing the task of cooking, because they like choosing together what to prepare, learning how to cook other dishes and creating something with the ingredients that other people have brought. For example, informants said about cooking meals with friends:

"I really like that… To do things together, to prepare the food together, to talk while doing this, it's like a social activity" (German young man, 22 years old).

"I mean cooking together is funny, people stand around, drink wine, some people are working, chopping things, others are talking, chatting, it's better than when you work on your own" (German young man, 23 years old).

"Everybody brings something, we don't talk before about what we are cooking, but everybody brings something and then there is always a good… enough. And we always fit together, and we decide then what we cook together" (German young woman, 28 years old).

No one of the French population spoke about this pleasure. The only person who spoke about cooking together underlined that cooking together is for her a source of conflict between cookers and it is not a convivial moment.
"I like to do it my way. Cooking for me is a time to be quiet, you do something and before starting you have an idea about how you will do it, so if you do it with many people it goes "Ah but yes, if I were you I would do it like this", I do not like it, it is a pity because it could be convivial to cook together" (French young woman, 22 years old).

This does not mean that the practice of cooking together or side by side among French young adults does not exist. However, this practice was not valorised in their discourses as something convivial or as an essentially part of the pleasure of inviting and gathering people for eating. On the contrary, for most of the German young adults met during this research, the possibility to cook together was expressed as one main element of meal sociability.
Many of the interviewed German young adults do not have the same concerns regarding solo eating events. An important aspect repeatedly underlined in the discourses of German young adults was the importance of eating following their rhythms instead of social conventions in order to eat when they are hungry and not because it is an established hour where they are expected to have lunch or dinner or to wait for the other people. Some of the young adults encountered in Berlin, even if they live in a shared flat, tend to not share food and for several reasons, they prefer to manage their food individually. So, even if sometimes they eat at the same time as their flatmates, everyone may cook their own food. It is also possible that if they share food shopping, which was the case in few shared flats, one person cooks more food, eats and leaves the food for the other people coming for example twenty minutes later or for those who are at the flat but do not want to eat at that time. Another aspect suggesting that the German young adults give a lot of importance to individual choice regarding to mealtimes was the diffusion of occasions in which only one person is eating and the other one is accompanying her/him without consuming food at the same time, because she/he has already eaten or is not hungry yet.
The diversity of tastes and diets is more tolerated among German people, who leave more freedom to personal food choice and different diets. Most of the people encountered in Berlin have in their social network vegetarian or allergic people. As a result, when they cook or go eating with people, they pay particular attention to the possibility that some people may not eat some kinds of food. This aspect appeared as well in the survey directed by Fischler, where the researchers revealed that the German population prefers to have more choice and for several reasons they tolerate a guest who calls the host before coming to a home dinner to specify what he/she does not eat (Fischler et al., 2008).
This data suggests the existence of different attitudes towards food in France and Germany, such as the role of the individual choice and the social norms of eating together. For several historical, ideological and contextual reasons, mealtime seem to be a central social institution in France. The established and consolidated systems of norms strongly regulate mealtimes, meal content and meal structure. This system as other studies confirmed is homogenous in France and has not evolved so much during last decades (De Saint Pol, 2005; Herpin, 1988; Pfirsch, 1997). In Germany, historical and ideological conditions have encouraged individuality and communitarianism (Elias, 1976; Pfirsch, 1997; Weber, 1967). This does not mean that meals are not sociable occasions for German young adults. An example of this is the fact that Germans really often underlined the pleasure of taking the time to eat. Nonetheless, they do not define their solo eating occasions as quicker, as the French population underlined. This point seems to highlight that for Germans the festive or extra-ordinary meals are the occasions when they have the possibility to take their time to eat. On the contrary, for the French population, the fact of eating alone and consequently quicker is exceptional, because it is not what they are used to. Furthermore, eating and food are central topics of discussion in the French population and mostly when there are gatherings of people, they are around eating events. However, meals do not seem to be the privileged occasions between German young adults, who mostly find a pretext to

gather people together for a meal, such as cooking, watching a film or playing table games. There are many other activities that are undertaken between German young adults in order to gather people together and these activities are not always preceded or did not always include a shared meal.
Attitudes towards food seem to influence feelings of eating alone and eating with others. The topic of this article reveals as well a diversity of cultural patterns surrounding food. One example of this is the different ways of organization in the preparation of the meal between French and German young adults. For the French population, it is mostly about cooking for others and for the German one, it is often cooking together.

5. Conclusions

This article investigated social representations and practices of eating alone and eating together in young adults with the aim of exploring pleasures and stress aroused by the presence and the absence of people during meals. More specifically, the paper underlined the similarities observed in a specific age group within a historical context and the differences identified in the two countries, which can be explained by the socialization of the young adults in a specific socio-political context with its values, norms and structures.
Furthermore, even if the more diffused representations lead people to perceive eating alone as a negative experience and eating together as a sociable occasion, the paper highlighted that it is possible to consider the reverse of the phenomena. Eating as an individual activity could also be a source of pleasure, because it exempts people from several social constraints. Eating as a social activity does not only stimulate positive feelings, creating in this way the conditions to weave sociability. It could also be source of conflicts as any social interaction governed by hierarchies, norms, etc.
As underlined in the introduction, social scientists insist on the idea that meals are social occasions (Douglas and Nicod, 1974) and that for some individuals, eating alone is not even really eating (Sobal, 2000). A "proper" meal is essentially a social affair (Murcott, 1982; Rotenberg, 1981). Recent studies noticed that eating is mostly preferred when it is done with others. However, on one hand, more and more people have to eat alone, because of their working schedule or their living arrangement. In these cases, they do not have the choice of sharing meals. On the other hand, young adults encountered in this research appreciate as well some aspects of solo eating. These are related to the negative aspects of sociality: the obligation of discussion, the negotiation between the wishes of each individual, social norms, etc.
Additionally, the conception of eating and cooking as a social affair or as an individual matter is related to cultural patterns, as other studies underlined. For example comparing the meanings of eating well in France and Sweden, Bildtgård noticed that in France a good meal is a social event. The longer it lasted, the better it is. The pleasure of eating in France is linked with conviviality. The meal in France is also described as the opportunity to get together with colleagues, friends, etc. In the Swedish population, the social aspect of eating is less important and more connected with feast, such as for the German population we met in this research (Bildtgård, 2010). Feelings created by eating alone or eating together provoke differences not only in the reasons inducing the liking or disliking of social eating occasions, but also in the social arrangement of eating events (e.g. eating during mealtime, food choice, etc.) and the social organisation of meals (e.g. cooking for others, cooking together, etc.). For example, the norm of commensality in France ensures a certain regularity in meal times. In addition, this study highlighted how for the French population food is a gift and by offering a cooked meal is the expression of themselves. On the contrary, in the German population social ties are more commonly constructed by cooking together. This creates between them the feeling of belonging to a community. So, the mealtimes are for both sociable events. However, sociability for ones seem to be more the shared activity and the time spent in the kitchen and for the others, it is the time spent at the table and the communication during meal, which are valorised in their discourses.
Negative and positive feelings of eating alone and of eating together influence the appreciation of meals and the contrary: a well-prepared and tasty meal contributes to the social occasion (Bildtgård, 2010: 223). The catering industry has to adapt its offer to customers' needs. For example, it creates restaurants facilitating the experience for solitary customers by promoting communal tables (Jonsonn and Pipping Ekström, 2009) or it sells individual portions for people living alone, etc. Restaurants also offer a food choice to the customers allowing people to eat what they prefer thanks to the *menu à la carte* or they offer convivial experiences thanks to communal plates, which allow individuals to share the food from the same plate (Warde and Martens, 2000). While the restaurants ensure people the possibility of what they can eat independently of what their companions eat, young adults said that eating with friends at someone's home is more convivial. Eating at home is more intimate, less impersonal

and less social rules have to be followed. This study consented to observe forms of commensality among young adults, which represent an answer to the lifestyle of this age group, but they might be also the reflection of contemporary eating practices. The characteristics of the way in which people gather together in order to share meals allows them to have food choice, freedom in eating rhythms and the participation of guests in the preparation. The meals observed in young adults' eating events are a sort of buffet, where guests come with some food, help in the cooking process or contribute with money. In these situations, some of the stress felt by the host (e.g. failing the dish, cooking alone for others, etc.) and by the guests (e.g. do not enjoy the food proposed, formality, etc.) could be overcome. So, it is possible to affirm that the desire of freedom in food choice and in rhythms encouraging the individualisation of eating patterns does not necessarily lead to the declining of shared meals. Food sharing keeps its role of federating people, building extra-familial sociability and socializing individuals into a meal structure, but also in values and norms of society. The needs of the societies evolve over time. Therefore, forms of commensality evolve as well accordingly to individuals and societies' needs and social conditions.

This paper is a first reflection on this specific aspect of eating, its cultural embodiment and the impacts that it could have on the evolution of forms of commensality. In scientific literature, it is possible to read a lot about neophobia, but what about the presence or absence of people during food events? What about being familiar with companions? Sharing meals could be helpful to taste new ingredients and new dishes and might help to experience new situations and contexts. Understanding feelings of customers during solo or social eating events is an important aspect to consider for improving the hospitality sector, as the study of Jonsonn and Pipping Ekström has shown. Their study only paid the attention to specific socio-demographic profiles. Other studies should be done in order to analyse the phenomenon across cultures, social class and age groups. In addition, it might be important to study these phenomena with a chronological perspective with the aim of identifying their evolution through time. Moreover, recent researches have observed that eating with others or alone has impacts on food consumption. These studies underlined the effect on the quantity of food intake. It could be interesting to investigate further the relationship between the social dimension of eating and the quality of food consumed.

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Control of eating behaviour and eating pleasure among French female college students

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1. Introduction

In order to efficiently promote food education, it is necessary to know eaters; to know how and why they make determined choices, as well as to know their environment. This paper presents a part of the results acquired during a study on standards, behaviours, and representations about food and body among French female college students. Certain themes like control of eating behaviour, eating pleasure, body image and representations of beauty, a healthy body and slimness have been tackled.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, representations of the human body have greatly changed. Aesthetic norms value an increasingly thinner standard of the body (Williams and Germov, 2004), while in the medical sphere, obesity has been institutionalized to the point of it officially being considered an illness and a worldwide epidemic (Poulain, 2009). Scientific knowledge about nutrition and body have converged with the interests of the pharmaceutical, food, slimming and health insurance industries to justify an increased desire to lose weight and the "lipophobia" phenomenon (Poulain, 2009; Gracia, 2010). In occidental countries, a body that is not in keeping with aesthetic norms of slenderness, then perceived as a "curvy body", is a sign of sickness, gluttony, loss of control, weakness and moral incorrectness (Fischler, 1990), and it is accorded a stigma value (Sobal, 2004). On the other hand, attributes such as moral self-control and social distinction are associated with thinness, which has become the symbol of good health, beauty and discipline (Gracia, 2010).

Control of body shape, especially weight, has become an important matter of concern in society, which can be observed in the increase of plastic surgeries (ASPS, 2010), in the consumption of cosmetic products (Lipovetsky, 1997) and in the high rate of people, mainly women, who are on a diet (Germov and Williams, 1996). In recent decades, there has been a weakening of the social normative system for regulating food behaviours (Fischler, 1990) and the medicalization of food has resulted in the definition and establishment of an optimal diet (Poulain, 2009). Aesthetic and dietary concerns have established new mechanisms for body and food regulation. This trend has been mainly observed in young women (Masson, 2004) and affects cultural, social and hedonistic dimensions of eating (Coveney, 2006).

The eating pleasure takes an essential part in the regulation of food consumption (Corbeau, 2008) and what is considered as "nutritionally correct" does not seem to be humanly reasonable since it imposes the same standards to different individuals and eventually it does not consider the complexity of the act of eating. Therefore, dietary standards would have demonized food, and by doing so would have transformed the pleasure into the enemy of food, with a great risk of unbalancing individuals with regards to their spontaneous regulation system, among which hunger, satiety and eating pleasure (Coveney, 2006). In France, gastronomy takes a special place, and it is a cultural characteristic that participates in the construction of French identity (Poulain, 2004). In this context, food taste and pleasure seem to be explicitly claimed elements by the French and these dimensions mark their relationship to food. Furthermore, pleasure and health, in France, seem to be two closely related dimensions (Fischler and Masson, 2005).

This study intends to comprehend to what extent the medicalization of food and the seeking of weight loss can affect the relationship that French female college students have between their control of eating behaviours and their eating pleasure.

2. Methodology

This research was based on a qualitative method. Data were collected through semi-directive individual interviews with 20 randomly selected French female college students, between 18 and 25 years old, living in the same city in France. This age bracket has been chosen because it marks a transitional phase characterised by psychosocial modifications, where young adults are building their autonomous lives and their identities. In that context, food has a central position: it enables not only the reading of ambivalences, of the quests for a greater autonomy, but also the decisive practice of reorganisation and restructuration of their everyday life. It is thus marked by health and economic issues, but also cultural and identity issues (Tibère and Poulain, 2010). Moreover, according to Masson (2004), among the French women aged between 18 and 24 years old who took part in his study, 48% had the experience of diet and they declared they had done four diets on average.

These women, coming from a variety of academic backgrounds, were contacted at Toulouse University campus. The locations where the interviews took place were determined in accordance to the preferences of the interviewees and the interviews lasted between 40 and 70 minutes. Though this was not a representative sample, participants represented a diverse set of perspectives.

The interviews were carried out using a previously piloted interview guide, and images from women's magazine were used as discussion

prompts about bodies, beauty, and health. The interview guide was divided according to the study's main themes: food habits – including questions about practices, representations, food norms and eating pleasure – health, body and beauty. The interviews were taped and transcribed. An analysis of the themes and sub-themes from the interviews was conducted, including a counting of the number of times certain relevant words were used. The respondents were divided into categories according to their behaviours and values. Data gathering and analysis have been processed according to qualitative methodological instructions presented by Kauffman (2008).

3. Results

The analysis showed that the women's discourses about food, pleasure and beauty are contradictory. Women's relationship with food is characterized by a constant control of food intake and an acute awareness of their eating behaviours, filled by competing norms: aesthetic, medical and cultural. The respondents speak of the act of controlling, of "being careful" or of balancing their food intake. Control of eating behaviours was considered as a positive trait. It is a sign of a healthier diet, of a more appropriate rhythm of life, of a control of their bodies, and of life in general. Furthermore, it's about a personal goal and a demonstration of one's individual capacity.

Women use several strategies to control their eating behaviour and as such their bodies: quantity control, selection of certain foods over others, controlling snacking, modification of cooking techniques, simplification of evening meals, controlling where food comes from, and physical activity. Furthermore, they usually do not consider this control of food as a diet, but just a normal "control". From their point of view, dieting has a negative connotation and is thus rejected, though "being careful" is considered an acceptable and appropriate practice in daily life. It is a healthy lifestyle that goes further than simply a question of what one eats.

Dietary control in these young women is principally due to aesthetic motivations and the ideal of slimness. While health concerns play a role, health and aesthetics merge as women associate healthy bodies with thin bodies and with beautiful bodies. Knowledge of nutrition and health do affect their eating habits though scientific knowledge gets interwoven with aesthetic norms, and the desire to attend to health concerns is more associated with obtaining a physicality that is "in shape" or is a "healthy" body. The latter, as described by young women, is a "normal" body size, is a thin body, pictured as a model's body.

The loss of control is negatively perceived, leads to guilt, and is often associated with moments when women take pleasure in eating. The young women interviewed can be divided into three distinctive groups according to how they interpret the relationship between self-control and eating for pleasure. The first group reconciles pleasure and a balanced diet, reporting taking pleasure in food that is considered healthy. The discourse of the second group believes that "pleasure" and "healthy" are two distinct yet reconcilable concepts. The third group sees "pleasure" and "healthy" as irreconcilable concepts. However, for all three groups, pleasure is usually experienced alongside guilt. We have also observed that these three paradigms of the relationship between control and pleasure are also associated with the social representations these women attach to the enjoyment of eating.

According to the respondents, one must simultaneously eat a balanced diet and find pleasure in it. Nevertheless, even if food pleasure is important, it is paradoxically generally perceived as a failure of the will – a "giving in" to things which are "not necessary," "not essential", or is considered gluttony not associated with biological needs. These foods are normally described as cakes, chocolate, foods high in fat, or certain traditional foods and recipes. Often these foods are perceived as only acceptable for special occasions or for shared consumption. One's favourite food is generally the one that is controlled or the first to be cut in the case of a controlled diet. It is interesting to observe that when these women describe having "eaten well" they rarely evoke the hedonistic aspects of eating and rather put the aspects of eating associated with health first.

Moreover, from the respondents' point of view, allowing oneself enjoyment becomes practically synonymous with "getting fat" and thus, avoiding pleasure helps one to maintain a more stable weight. Therefore, guilt is closely associated with the fear of putting on weight. Dietary control, weight control and eating pleasure seem to be in constant tension, to the extent that it at times becomes a real "battle".

It appears that in order to accept pleasure from eating, it must be controlled, rationalized and subject to health concerns, in particular aesthetic ones. In order to do so they must control the quantity, the frequency, and the context of eating certain taboo foods, and must compensate for this behaviour through exercise or other methods.

4. Discussion

According to the results of this study, the interviewed women frequently control their eating behaviours. This control is driven by health reasons but above all by aesthetic, and it shows an influence on their relation to the eating pleasure. This context seems to be associated with the intensification of slimness aesthetic norm, and with the medicalization of the body and food over the last decades.

The idea of an "optimal" or "balanced" diet is prevalent in the contemporary nutritional discourse in favour of good health, and is also considered as a panacea conferring social, economic and psychological benefits (Gracia, 2010). According to Apfeldorfer (2008), individuals are influenced by various discourses propagated by the media, the medical profession, public polices and society in general. These discourses promote the belief that the body and food must constantly be the objects of control. People are encouraged to put into place a carefully planned and rationalised diet as the way to avoid obesity (Apfeldorfer, 2008). To be "on a diet" has become a general practice and a permanent state, principally among women (Germov and Williams, 1996). The individuals challenge themselves through their body, their reactions, and their appetites in a battle against their unmanageable, rebel body, which is really their natural body (Apfeldorfer, 2008).

This discourse of individual responsibility (Fischler, 1990) has as consequences both widespread control of eating and a negative influence on the meaning of food enjoyment. According to Aimez (1979) "the pleasures of the table, in turn, inherited a massive guilt. And this guilt, through a shift in taboos and prohibitions, has brought about and supported a pathology of eating behaviour…". Submitting to a diet and normalizing this idea of "being careful", as named by the women in this study, go further than the domain of eating by also governing manners and social norms. This leads to the taking of moral positions (Fischler, 1990), such as transforming food pleasure into a deviant behaviour.

As Basdevant describes, modern eating is subject to the "eat/be thin" dichotomy wherein lies the moment of "giving in to craving". For him, medical discourses reinforce the aesthetic norm of thinness and at the same time are influenced by this norm: "From an accusatory view towards "fatness", there is a tendency to consider modern man as a nutritional delinquent via a linear discourse (…)" (Basdevant, 2003). This context, wherein pleasure from eating is perceived as a delinquency, demonstrates the moralistic discourse surrounding being overweight, which is interpreted as a deviant act. Guilt, sin, temptation and shame, which usually encircle sexuality, are thus transferred to eating (Germov and Williams, 1996).

There exists both a competition and a contradiction of norms. French culture (Fischler and Masson, 2005), discourses of public health (INPES, 2009), and discourses of the medical profession all advocate enjoying eating. However, in the representations of these women, eating pleasure seems to be almost irreconcilable with dietary and aesthetic norms - they are fused such that the consumption of certain foods or of a "good meal", sources of pleasure, are experienced as a transgression of the norm.

5. Conclusion

There is a challenge in developing strategies that both promote healthy eating habits and fight obesity: to not legitimize the obsession with being thin and to not interfere with the representations of eating pleasure. This study suggests that the transmission of nutritional recommendations has to be done with precaution and taking into consideration the hedonic dimension of eating, because these recommendations may legitimate over restrictive dietary behaviours and risk stigmatizing some food products and eating pleasure.

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Book Review : Sociologie d'une crise alimentaire. Les consommateurs à l'épreuve de la maladie de la vache folle

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Abstract

The food systems of the occidental countries have faced multiple sanitary crisis. The *mad cow* crisis, having deeply left its mark on individual and collective minds, induced several social, political and economic repercussions by directly influencing the food choices of the consumers. In France, in particular, the food choices were affected at different levels and for relatively short periods.
In what conditions and in which way the consumers change their food behaviour when they are potentially exposed to risks ? The economical, epidemiological, socio-anthropological and legal analysis of this crisis tends to demonstrate that the food system conservatism and resilience would seem, in this perspective, to be factors defining the food practices in a context of food crises.
In his book, *Sociologie d'une Crise Alimentaire*, Jocelyn Raude throws a new light on the theory of food unreasonableness against risk, often believed as being the consequences of the *irrational* fears of the consumers : indeed, he proposes an new analysis of the risk perception and human behaviour during the *mad cow* crisis based on the diversity of rationalities that structure the consumers' food behaviours during a sanitary crisis.

Keywords: Food systems – 'mad cow' crisis – food behaviour – food risk – food rationalities

Senior Lecturer in Sociology at School of the High Studies of Public health[I], Rennes, Jocelyn Raude obtained the prize Jean Trémolières for human sciences applied to nutrition for his work on the consumer's behaviour in the context of the *mad cow* crisis. This book based on his thesis, supervised by Claude Fischler, received in 2008 the price of the *« Animal-Société-Aliment»* (Animal-Society-Food) association awarded by the French Academy of Veterinary Medicine.

In the context of constant and sustainable improvement of the food sanitary security and of the food industrialization rapid expansion, collective fears triggered by the food crisis are concrete proof of the consumers' irrationality (Guégen L., 2001). With his work, Jocelyn Raude questions the theory of food unreasonableness against sanitary risks.

The author proposes a reasoning structured in six chapters. He starts with a definition of the notion of risks and rationality and with an analysis of the sociological context in which the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy[II] crisis emerged in the nineties. He continues with a literature review that enables him to make his research assumptions according to which: first, the food-related behaviours change depending directly on the perceived sanitary risk and second, the perceived sanitary risk is modulated by psychological, sociological and cultural factors. The analysis of the data acquired during these two national surveys, and from a consumer focus group, enables the author to verify most of his assumptions. A new dimension is introduced in the last chapter: the culinary system. These six chapters lead Jocelyn Raude to suggest the idea of the consumer's variety of rationalities and behaviours as a reaction to sanitary risks. He proposes an objectivation of food-related fears in order to define how the French people have restructured their food-related decision against the risk of contamination to BSE.

In the first chapter of the book, *The conceptualization of risk and rationality*, the concepts of risk and rationality through economic, epidemiologic, socio-anthropologic and legal approaches are discussed. This discussion of concepts brings the author to present the articulation of instrumental and value rationalities defining their alimentary decision-making: in other words, the friction between the eater's autonomy and the ecological, social and cultural constraints lead, in a specific context, to his food choices.

The sociologic context of the BSE crisis is defined in the second chapter. Based on the analysis of socio-economic and politico-media data, the author set the BSE crisis in the dynamic of food-related behaviours' modifications. The underlying decrease of the red meet consumption initiated in the eighties, along with socio-demographic, socio-cultural and politicals factors. The social and occupational group, the level of education, the age of the individuals, the growing concern for hygiene, health and aesthetic, the movement for animal production ethic, the media coverage of this international crisis since 1990, etc. represent a whole of factors that enable to characterize this crisis as social, political and sanitary since the end of the eighties. Following a review of the previous sociology, psychology and micro-economy works, the author put the food behaviours down in homeo-static systems being regulated by a resilience to bovine meet during the crisis: the heterogeneity of the consumers' reactions facing the risk of exposure to prion disease, responsible of the BSE, depends on the decrease, in very variable-proportions, of the French household consumption and not of a general and transitional decrease of the bovine meet purchase.

The third chapter recounts the methodological approach of the research. By endeavouring to explain the diversity of the behaviours observed in France, the author proposes to articulate the food behaviour, through their biological, psychological and socio-cultural structure, with the perception of risk. Thus, the author analyses the role of the socio-psycologic risk factors through a cognitive component by evaluating this risk (knowledge of the risk, benefits related to the risk, etc.) and through an emotional component by defining the fear and anxiety towards this risk (personal sensitivity to risk, confidence to the risk manager, etc.). This approach highlights the dimensions of the perceived risk, then to show the linear impact of this perceived risk in the bovine meet consumption in France.

The next chapter, *Statistic analysis of PREST[III] data*, presents the analysis of the data from both national studies perception of the risk of contagious subacute encephalopathy survey. The first one was performed in January 2001 in a political, economical and social environment strongly marked by sanitary concerns and the colapse of bovine meet consumption ; the second one is performed in February 2002, at a moment where bovine meet consumption is progressively

[I] EHESP : École des Hautes Études de Santé Publique
[II] BSE : Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
[III] PREST : Perception du Risque d'Encéphalopathie Subaiguë Transmissible (perception of the risk of contagious subacute encephalopathy)

returning to normal. By taking an active interest to the perception of risk through several psychological, sociological and cultural factors, this study shows that the epidemiological anticipation, the feeling of food alienation, the sensitivity to food risk and the attachment to bovine meet are the main variables allowing structuring the food behaviour of the French population during the crisis. Moreover, having a liking for red meet seems to play a fundamental role in the consumers' decision against the risk of contamination to BSE by eating infected bovine meet. It is then relevant to establish a link between the liking for bovine meet and risk perception.
In order to confirm the methodological liability of the obtained results, the author proposes, in the fifth chapter, to corroborate his results to the surveys realised between 1996 and 2001 by the Society of Studies of Consummation, the Distribution and the Publicity[IV] concerning the household consumption. The discernment of the two studies' results shows that the food choices of the French consumers before the crisis have a significant influence on their food behaviour in case of a sanitary crisis involving a risk for their health. Hence, the consumers who were very keen on the bovine meet consumption before the crisis are less able to change their consumption habits in the context of the *mad cow* crisis.

By criticizing the individual approaches (instrumental rationality and cognitive rationality approaches) because of their inadequacies in terms of explanation of the consumers' behaviour during the crisis, the author proposes to tackle these behaviours through systemic approaches, in the sixth and last chapter, *Individual rationality and systemic rationality*. By taking into account the social and environmental factors in the explanation of the human behaviours, the systemic approaches allow to state that the food consumption should be apprehended in correlation with the culinary context (geographical, social and logic meaning) (Poulain J.-P., 2002), in which it is evolving. If the analysis of the SECODIP data did not permit to fully verify the theory of the author ; therefore, the various works, and more specifically those of *Claude Lévi-Strauss* (1958), *Kurt Lewin* (1940) and *John Bennet* (1943) concerning the centrality of food, the food changes, the phenomena of cognitive dissonance, etc., enable the author to clarify his words. Thus, Jocelyn Raude proposes a tendency according to which: *"the more food occupies a central position in a given culinary system, the more it is subjected to resistance or resilience with respect to changes induced by risk situations"* (p 228). The symbolic and empirical importance of the liking for bovine meet, correlated to homeo-static mechanisms that were presented before, would define the process in which the French population would have been in a state of behavioural and cognitive inertial system during the period of *mad cow* crisis.

By referring to Cavailhès proposals (1996) according to which the latent tendencies of the food systems are only amplified by the recent food crisis, the author concludes by assuming that: "*the consumption patterns observed during the crisis would prefigure the changes to come in the meet-based consumption"* (p239) : the food system conservatism and resilience would seem, in this perspective, to be factors defining the food practices in a context of food crises.

Thus, starting on the questioning on food unreasonableness the author presents the food system resilience as being the essential factor in food-related decision in period of crisis.

Although this topic is usually studied in social sciences, the author proposes a multidisciplinary approach of the notion of risk through social sciences, economical sciences and legal sciences, which leads to the following essential elements:

- The introduction of the consumers' reactions' paths faced to the sanitary risk based on act of consumption and the worries before, during and after the period of crisis is introduced. This prospect, that could be considered ambitious, calls the various disciplines to study the evolution of the eaters' behaviours in order to correlate them to the periods of food crises.
- Second of all, the notion of food centrality is traduced. As the *"Triangle du manger",* proposed by *Jean-Pierre Corbeau* (Corbeau J.-P., 2002) putting in interaction an eater, a food and a place, evolving in the time and in the space, Jocelyn Raude proposes to define a triangle linking the eater, food and the perceived risk. This mechanism, which leads to continue the systemic approach, would enable to comprehend how the eaters' behaviours faced to a perceived risk change. This would permit to reinforce the variety of the rationality of eaters' alimentary decision-making.

Finally, the last essential dimension of this work consists in pushing the eater's rationality forward during the BSE crisis. This approach leads to rehabilitate the uninitiated thinking in a period of crisis by the introduction of a cost-benefit calculation, in opposition with scientific thoughts which define the risk in terms of mortality and morbidity (Poulain J-P., 2002).. Against the risk, the

[IV] SECODIP : Société d'Etudes de la Consummation, la Distribution et de la Publicité

eaters make choices for society centred on questions of reason, ethics but also of neophobia and food anxiety in what Paul Rozin and Claude Fischler name *the omnivore's paradox* (Rozin P., 1976 ; Fischler C., 1990), mechanism which tends the omnivore to diversify his food intake and incorporate food that are culturally identified. The author brings here an extra weight on the people's choice during a period of crisis with the social and cultural aspects that could explain the people's reactions.

Defined by a multi-disciplinary concept cross-referring to a whole biological, psychological and socio-cultural structures linked to selection, preparation and food consumption (Chapelot and Louis-Sylvestre, 2004), the eater's food-related behaviours are now redefined in a period of crisis. This book is a way in to analyse the food-related behaviours analysis, the comprehension and redefinition of the alimentary social space (Poulain J.-P., 2003) in a period of sanitary crisis.

The originality of this book is surely due to Jocelyn Raude's challenge: to bring something new to the theory of food unreasonableness during the mad cow crisis. Also let us underline the work educational contribution centred on a large literature review and on the accuracy and the rigour given to the treatment of qualitative and quantitative data enable the readers to make use of various essential resources, although it can sometimes weigh down the text. However, through a food-sociology eye, one will regret that the chosen reflection is limited to the French consumers without considering the whole European consumers affected by this crisis. The resistance of the French food model could have been redefined. Finally, the analysis of the dynamic of the relation of confidence with food (Bilstgard T., 2008) and more precisely with the meet industry, main cause of this crisis, is missing.

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Book Review : Nourrir de Plaisir: Régression, transgression, transmission, régulation?

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Nourrir de Plaisir is a compilation of twenty-five essays first presented at a colloquium of the same name at François Rabelais University, Tours, April 3-5, 2008. In this volume, social scientists, psychologists, historians, and nutritionists explore the role of pleasure in eating, focusing on issues concerning the politics of food education, health, and the social construction of the self. The title, a play on words with the French expression "*mourir de plaisir*," meaning "to die of pleasure," refers to the central tension around which the volume is organized: the simultaneous danger and necessity of alimentary pleasure. The authors' common goal is to explore how enjoyment derived from food and eating is understood and structured in culturally specific ways. In so doing, they elucidate how distinct notions of pleasure influence alimentary behaviors as well as conceptions of self. The volume's primary geographic focus is France, although many authors use cross-cultural comparisons as a point of departure.

In the editor's introduction, Corbeau claims that in modern societies, eating has been rationalized and medicalized to the point that food has been reduced to the sum of its nutritional parts. He calls for a move away from the conceptualization of eating focused exclusively on nutritional information, recommendation, and obligation—which he describes as an increasingly widespread social concern—in favor of revalorizing pleasure by incorporating enjoyment into processes of socialization into eating practices. These texts reveal the pitfalls of viewing pleasure from food in opposition to healthy eating habits, describing the processes through which this dichotomization has taken place.

This volume contributes significant empirical data as well as theoretical insights into the scientific investigation of alimentary pleasure, particularly within industrialized food systems. Authors investigate how notions of pleasure are collectively constructed and structured within modern social institutions, using methods such as participant observation and interviews (Guétat, Masdoua, Puisais, Casilli et al., Quantin, Comoretto, Lalanne & Tibère, Elodin, Précigout, Van de Casteele, Puisais), textual and visual analysis (Manson, Cochoy, Salvat, Montagne, d'Amato, Bobrie, Contreras, Boutaud), and even psychoanalysis (Fozières).

Poulain and Dupuy approach the subject of alimentary enjoyment from a theoretical perspective, historically contextualizing shifting notions of pleasure. Drawing upon Fischler and Masson's (2008) findings, both authors highlight a distinction between the American/Anglo-Saxon model of conceptualizing alimentary pleasure and that of the French and southern Europeans. As Poulain explains, in the former case, alimentary discourse alternates between insistence upon the necessity of self-control and the notion of pleasure as associated with "fun" or "letting oneself go." This model includes a moralized dichotomization of healthy vs. pleasurable foods, in which pleasure in eating is perceived as incompatible with healthful eating habits. In the French model, on the other hand, pleasure in eating is derived from "gastronomic reflexivity" (p. 50). In Dupuy's terms, the French model is based on social prescriptions structuring commensality, which play a "protective role" against the problematic forces inherent to modern eating conditions (p. 93).

However, other contributors to this volume demonstrate that despite its puritanical undertones, nutritional rhetoric which positions healthy eating habits in opposition to those which provide pleasure, is not unique to the Anglo-Saxon world. These scholars illustrate that seemingly contradictory notions of pleasure based on models of asceticism, hedonism, and temperance coexist on societal, familial, and even individual levels.

Montagne, for example, demonstrates the way distinct notions of pleasure coincide in her analysis of French periodicals. She identifies three themes found in magazines' alimentary narratives: "*bien manger*," "*beau manger*," and "*bon manger*," which may be glossed as "healthy eating," "beautiful eating," and "tasty eating" (p.133). Narratives of "*bien manger*," describe how to eat to maintain/improve health and articles devoted to "*beau manger*," highlight the eating habits necessary to be beautiful and/or thin. These themes fit squarely into what Poulain describes as an ascetic notion of pleasure (p. 51). Narratives of "*bon manger*," on the other hand, emphasize the immediate hedonistic pleasure of gastronomic eating. Montagne thus provides an empirical example of the alimentary logic described by Poulain and Dupuy in which enjoyment is hierarchized, certain pleasures deemed "coarse, immediate, [and] material" (p. 51) while others—in this case the pleasure of losing weight or becoming/remaining beautiful and healthy—are viewed as more subtle and associated with spiritual experience.

Salvat describes the coexistence of distinct notions of pleasure as communicated through symbolic role of sugar as compared to that of vegetables in contemporary French children's books. She explains that both are portrayed as rendering pleasure: the latter in terms of equilibrium, providing the characters of children's stories with a

balanced diet and energy, and the former in terms of transgression. Salvat explains that sugar is portrayed as a danger that may give pleasure only when consumed in moderation.

The question of how to regulate and control the simultaneously desirable and dangerous effects of pleasure procured from candy and sweets is a theme found throughout the volume, treated by Salvat, Manson, Lalanne, Tibère, and Quantin. When read alongside Salvat's piece, Manson's analysis of the role of candy in French literature from the 18th and 19th centuries highlights the historical specificity of understandings of the health hazards of sweets. Contrary to Salvat's findings, he explains that within these texts, the notion that pleasure derived from candy may be enjoyed *in moderation* is virtually absent. Candy is portrayed as inspiring such a strong desire among children that the only means by which it may regulated it is by instilling the child with a strong moral character.

In their ethnographic investigation of the role of candy in affective relationships among French families, Lalanne and Tibère demonstrate how rhetoric of moderation and restraint coincide in contemporary French households. They illustrate that in homes where parents discursively maintain a policy of exceptional candy consumption, this act may actually be habitual, even ritualistic among their children. Quantin's observations among young adults in the workplace illustrate that the tension between controlling and taking pleasure in consumption of sweets is also a central theme in the workday eating habits of adults. She explains that key to employees' strategies for breaking the monotony of the workday is the pleasure gained by transgressing office rules by eating sweets in the workplace.

The authors featured in this volume also highlight the moralized dichotomization of foods into categories of good v. bad/healthy v. pleasurable. Complementing her nutritional training with ethnographic observation in French primary schools, Masdoua poignantly illustrates the processes through which a nutritional education program worked to diabolize foods associated with pleasure, creating/reinforcing the notion that certain foods are "good," i.e. healthy, whereas those linked to pleasure are considered "bad." She describes the way students incorporated the campaign's nutritional narrative, which explicitly indicated that one should limit consumption of "*les produits plaisir*," (pleasurable products) as much as possible, given that they "provide no positive health benefits" (p. 64). She describes how the children began classifying foods they associate with pleasure as "bad foods" in accordance with the moral logic of the nutritional campaign, in which pleasure in eating is considered reprehensible, leading ultimately to punishment in the form of obesity. This analysis illuminates the ways that individuals are socialized into culturally specific understandings of and approaches to pleasure, another central theme in this volume.

Through their focus on alimentary socialization, contributors highlight the processes through which culturally specific notions of pleasure are established and reinforced. They elucidate processes through which social institutions—on both micro and macro levels—structure the ways that individuals come to understand and experience pleasure, and how these shared conceptions serve to reinforce group identity. In her theoretical/literary exploration of alimentary pleasure, Clément contends that through eating and talking, individuals collectively shape shared notions of, not only foods themselves and the pleasure they incite, but also of the world itself. She highlights the ways that alimentary metaphors provide a basis for understanding the world far beyond the table. Similarly, Puisais argues that to eat food prepared by a family member is to embody one's relation to that person. Drawing upon decades of observation and experiments in French primary schools concerning children's notions of taste, he contends that eating socializes individuals into specific familial and social roles.

On a familial level, Lalanne and Tibère's observations in French families shed light on the (sometimes contradictory) ways that parents socialize their children's eating habits and notions of pleasure. And through observation of household eating practices involving children and caregivers, La ville sheds light on the very processes through which children's comprehension of gustative pleasure is developed in contemporary society. She highlights the ways that adults structures children's alimentary enjoyment, demonstrating that among the French she observed, pleasure was deemed acceptable primarily when perceived as an occasional transgression of the ordinary alimentary rules allowed by adults.

Guétat, Comoretto and Précigout demonstrate how peers socialize one another into notions of alimentary pleasure, distinct to those they may have learned in the household. Drawing upon participant observation in French primarily schools Guétat and Comoretto both highlight the processes through which children structure one another's conceptions of alimentary enjoyment. Drawing upon observation in the school cafeteria, Guétat describes how primary school students

create gendered identities through mealtime interactions in the cafeteria. Focusing on the afternoon snack, Comoretto explores the ways in which shared snack preferences and the act of exchanging foods creates and demonstrates social links among children while simultaneously developing their conceptions food enjoyment. And Précigout describes how, once living independently, young people collectively reshape conceptions of alimentary pleasure learned as children, emphasizing a distinction between functional daily meals and festive food consumption at convivial meals consumed at each other's homes and restaurants.

Contributors to this volume also analyzed the processes through which individuals' notions of pleasure in eating are shaped within larger social institutions, such as the educational system (Masdoua, Puisais), the workplace (Quantin), literature (Mansno, Salvat, Clément), and the media (Cochoy, d'Amato, Bobrie, Contreras). These latter authors used textual and visual analysis of food packaging and/or advertisements to illuminate the role the food industry plays in structuring notions of pleasure in shared alimentary narratives. Cochoy, d'Amato, Bobrie, and Contreras each examine the ways that the modern food industry attempts to structure and harness consumers' notions of alimentary pleasure in order to increase sales, portraying pleasure (alimentary or social, based on asceticism or hedonism) as stemming directly from the products advertised.

These insights into the creation of shared understandings of alimentary pleasure shed light on pieces by Casilli et al., Sirota, Elodin, and Van de Casteele concerning alimentary pleasure and identity. These authors explore the ways that food enjoyment serves to enact links between certain individuals, simultaneously distancing others who fail to share preferences. Focusing on a single object of alimentary pleasure—the birthday cake—Sirota argues that the specific type of cake that is used to celebrate one's birthday serves to position an individual within the society at large based on age, gender, and nationality. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis, Casilli et al. investigate distinctions in methods of alimentary adaptation among Brazilian, Chinese, and Russian immigrant families living in Los Angeles. They describe each group's distinct understandings and methods of regulation of pleasure, structured by gendered and intergenerational relations, which serve to create unique group identities associated with shared migration experience. Eloidin describes how group identity among young Guadeloupéens and Martiniquais studying in metropolitan France is marked by their distinct notions of what constitutes alimentary pleasure at home vs. in the hexagon and thus as compared to metropolitan French. Similarly, Van de Castelle's ethnographic examination of absinth consumption in Arc Jurassien, Switzerland demonstrates how regional identity is forged though shared notions of pleasure (and disgust) incited by the alcohol.

The articles presented in *Nourrir de Plaisir* provide a wealth of empirical data concerning the role of alimentation in the construction of identity and social bonds, the ways individuals are socialized into culturally specific notions of pleasure in eating, and the risks associated with eating in modern societies. The volume could have been strengthened by more explicit focus on the influence of political and economic factors on notions of pleasure. With the exception of Boutaud who discusses class divisions in airplanes, contributors made little mention of the influence of either race or class on experiences of alimentary pleasure. The middle class often appeared to be taken for granted as the focus of analysis (although d'Amato explicitly notes food advertisements' focus on this socio-economic group). Cochoy observes the fact that alimentary fears are a luxury (p. 27), a reflection which begs the question, is concern with the ideational opposition of eating habits associated with pleasure vs. health a privilege of the middle class? Overall, the essays in this volume illustrate the benefit of an interdisciplinary analysis of food in order to grapple with the complex and multivariate nature of the act of eating itself.

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